

INTRODUCING
THE NEW TESTAMENT

W. E. DENHAM



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INTRODUCING
THE NEW TESTAMENT

W. E. DENHAM, Th.D.

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THE NEW TESTAMENT

A Class Book for Sunday School
Teacher Training

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THIS BOOK MAY BE STUDIED IN CLASS OR INDIVIDUALLY

1. WHEN THE BOOK IS STUDIED IN CLASS

(1) Teachers will conduct the study in their own way. At least one class period should be allowed for each lesson; thus fifteen periods would be required for the completion of the book.

(2) The teacher will conduct a written examination at the close of the study; or preferably, the teacher may submit two tests, one at the close of Chapter VIII and the other on completion of the book. Questions for examination may be taken from the list given on pages 159-162.

(3) Members of the class will be asked to answer the questions at one sitting without the text-book or help of any kind. The teacher will ask that each pupil sign this statement: "I have neither given nor received help during this examination."

(4) The class teacher will examine and pass upon the papers of the class. A grade of 70 per cent is required for passing.

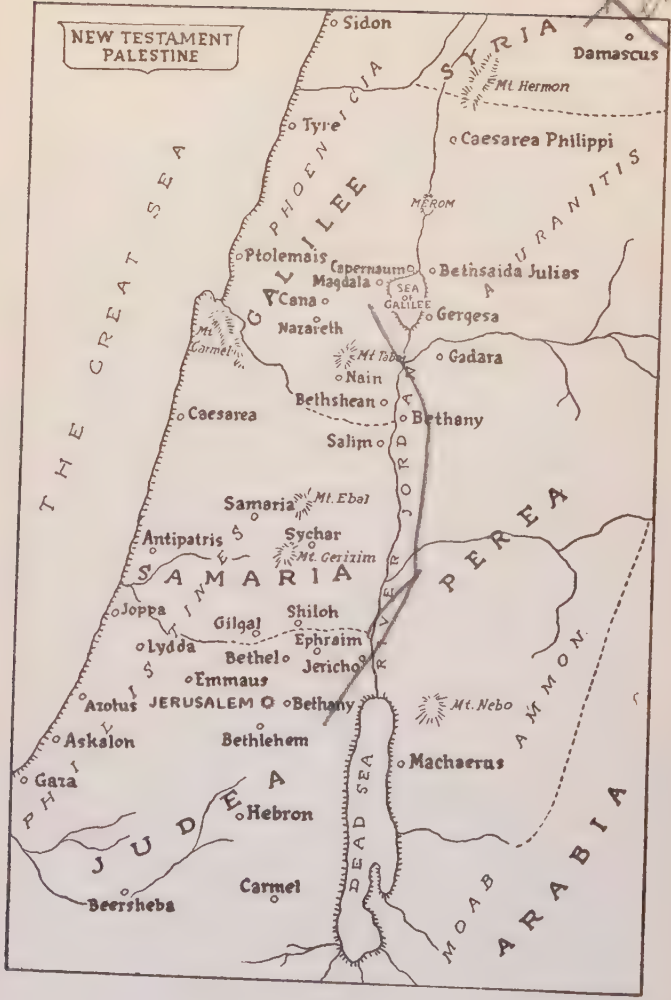
(5) The teacher will report on blanks prepared for the purpose the names and grades of those who make a passing mark.

2. WHEN THE BOOK IS STUDIED INDIVIDUALLY

Workers who find it impracticable to join a class, or who for any reason prefer to do the work individually, are permitted and encouraged to study the book alone. Individual students will study the book in their own way, and when they wish to stand a test they will apply for sealed questions and full directions. The questions will be selected from the list offered on pages 159-162. These tests will be conducted by the Educational Department of the Sunday School Board or the State Board of Missions.

EDUCATIONAL SECRETARY,
BAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD,
NASHVILLE, TENN.

Persia



I

THE 400 YEARS BEFORE THE GOSPEL ERA

No study of the New Testament—its history, political character, religious parties, and so forth—can be complete and satisfactory that does not take into consideration the events of the four centuries that had elapsed since the close of the Old Testament. The work of Nehemiah, the last historical character of the Old Testament, occurred about 400 years before the birth of Jesus. If the prophecy of Malachi came later, that is the only book that intervenes, and it is quite possible that his work occurred during the days of Nehemiah.

CHANGES OCCURRING DURING THE PERIOD

Along three different lines, marked changes are to be noted as we pass from the Old Testament to the New, viz.; in politics, in religion, in language.

I. In Politics

The change has been from the rule of Persia to the rule of Rome. The political history of the period falls into four parts:

PERSIAN PERIOD (B.C. 536 to 331)

At the close of the Old Testament, a part of the Jews had returned to their own country by the consent of Persia, which, having conquered Babylon, was then the great world-power. The Persians did not interfere to any great extent with the Jews, but were seemingly content to let them remain unmolested in their land.

THE GREEK PERIOD (B.C. 331 to 167)

In the year 331 B.C., control passed to Greece. For some time before this date there had been a struggle for supremacy between this nation and Persia. The Persian

Athena seat of Rule.

emperors looked with longing eyes toward the lands west of the Ægean Sea, and this longing was strengthened by the action of the Greeks in fostering an uprising against the Persian power in one of the cities of Asia Minor, which was inhabited by Greek colonists, but acknowledged the rule of Persia. Two campaigns of the Persians against Greece had failed, with great loss to the Persians and corresponding glory to the Greeks. The names Marathon and Thermopylæ will always bring back memories of the glorious spirit of the Greeks in fighting for their country against the superior forces of Persia.

In the year 331 B.C., however, Alexander the Great, the son of that Philip of Macedon who had succeeded in uniting the various states of the Greek peninsula under one control, was successful in a campaign against the Persians, and the seat of world control passed permanently from Asia.

Alexander did not long retain possession, dying in the year 320 B.C., but his campaigns had accomplished two things that bore largely on the later work of Christianity—uniting the known world under one responsible head, and providing a world language.

The death of Alexander was followed by the breaking up of the Greek Empire into several parts under the leadership of certain of his generals. Only two of these parts have any direct bearing upon Jewish history; Syria, under the Seleucid line of kings, descended from Seleucus, one of Alexander's chief generals; and Egypt, under the Ptolemies, descendants of another famous general.

About three years after the death of Alexander, Ptolemy, by treachery, seized upon Judah, which remained in the possession of Egypt until the year 198 B.C. The Ptolemies seem to have treated the Jews with consideration and even liberality, and this period was marked by a large migration of the Jews to Egypt. During this period, also, the Jewish scriptures were translated into Greek, which had become the international language. Josephus records that this was the work of seventy-two men, selected from each tribe, who finished the translation in seventy-two days, the work being done at the desire and under the direction of the Egyptian monarch. Whether this statement is wholly accurate or not, it is certain that the Septuagint, as the translation was called, was com-

pleted during these years, and by its means a wide circulation was assured for the Old Testament, the Jewish scriptures.

The settled control of the land of Palestine passed from the Ptolemies about the year 198 B.C. For several years it now changed hands repeatedly, being the buffer state between the rival countries of Egypt and Syria, but finally was lost to Egypt and came under the control of Syria until the year 167 B.C.

Under the Syrians, the lot of the Jews was not as happy as it had been under the Egyptians, but the climax was reached in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes. This king brought down upon his head the unsparing curses of the Jews. He sought to accomplish two ends, the Hellenizing of the Jews, and the changing of their religion. By "Hellenizing the Jews" is meant, simply, that he sought to stamp out their old Jewish national spirit, and to transform them into full Greek subjects. To the Jews, looking upon themselves as God's chosen people, this was in the highest degree repugnant. Their love for their nation and their land was almost passionate, and the efforts of Antiochus only crystallized and confirmed their patriotism. His efforts to change the religion took the form of an attempt to stamp out the worship of Jehovah and to substitute that of the Greek gods. In seeking these ends he spared no means. Cruelty marked his efforts. The Apocryphal books of the Maccabees give stories of the tortures inflicted on Jews in the effort to make them deny Jehovah and worship the gods of Greece; tortures which were unswervingly borne, and which failed of their object. The height of his abominations was reached when he commanded the worship of Jupiter instead of that of Jehovah, and even had swine sacrificed on the altar of the temple at Jerusalem.

His persecutions and abominations stirred up the Jews, and at last Mattathias, one of their number, slew an emissary of Antiochus, and fleeing to the hills, bade defiance to the Syrian power. He was joined by many other Jews and, finally, gathered a sufficient number to make some headway.

THE MACCABEAN PERIOD (B.C. 167 to 63).

On the death of Mattathias the leadership of his band passed to his son, Judas, called Maccabeus. This man gave

his name to the period. He was a wise and able general, and waged successful war against the Syrians. After him the leadership passed successively to his brothers, Jonathan and Simon, and, finally, under Hyrcanus, the son of Simon, independence was again won for the Jews in Palestine in the year 142 B.C.

From 142 to 63 B.C., the Jewish nation was once more independent, but the rulers who followed Hyrcanus lacked the spirit of courageous and self-sacrificing patriotism that had marked the early Maccabees, and they degenerated into office-seekers. At last, two brothers disputed the throne. As the outcome of their dispute, the Roman power was appealed to and, settling the dispute, took over the control of the country.

Once again the Jews had proved themselves unfit for national independence.

THE ROMAN PERIOD (B.C. 63 to New Testament).

Pompey, the Roman ruler who secured possession of Palestine, at first showed favor to one of the brothers, but a little later gave the political leadership of the land into the hands of Antipater, an Idumean (or Edomite), on whose death, and after severe struggles, it was given to his son, Herod the Great, whose infamous slaughter of the babes at Bethlehem was occasioned by the visit of the Wise Men from the East in their search for the infant Jesus.

To avoid the necessity of returning to this aspect of the study, it may be well to note that on the death of Herod the Great, the land was divided among three of his sons, Archelaus taking Judea, Antipas taking Galilee and Perea, and Philip taking the country to the northeast of the Sea of Galilee. After some years, Archelaus was removed and a Roman governor placed over Judea, the holder of that office during the active ministry of Jesus being Pontius Pilate.

These, then, are briefly the steps in the changing political conditions that brought the nation under the dominion of Rome. Though there may be an aspect of tragedy in the failure of the Jews in their second attempt at self-government, we cannot but be glad they failed, since it is hard to estimate the advantage to the new faith, Christianity, that came through the settled political conditions

that grew out of Rome's leadership, and the possibilities of spreading the gospel all through the Roman dominions.

II. In Religion

The New Testament shows the presence of religious parties and institutions that were unknown in the Old Testament.

1. RELIGIOUS PARTIES

We find mention made of Samaritans, Sadducees, Pharisees, Herodians, Zealots, etc.

Of these, the first three occur most prominently. They took their rise during this period. All three were both religious and political parties.

THE SAMARITANS

This party was beginning to appear in the closing days of the Old Testament. Its members descended from the mixed race that resulted when Sargon brought foreigners into Palestine, who intermarried with the poor Jews who had remained there after the fall of the Northern Kingdom. Nehemiah found himself opposed by these people in his efforts to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and his success in those efforts only served to widen the breach between his people and them. Under their leader, Sanballat, they set up an independent form of the Jewish religion, Manasseh, a renegade Jewish priest, who, contrary to the Jewish law, had married Sanballat's daughter, being made the high-priest of the new cult. The quarrel between the two parties, as to which was the true religion, was decided by one of the Egyptian kings in favor of the Jews, with Jerusalem as the center, but this did not put an end to the controversy, as was evident in the story of our Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria at the well of Sychar. The Samaritans continued, with their headquarters on Mount Gerizim, and, through the period, opposed the Jews in every possible way. It was this combination of political opposition and religious rivalry that made the Samaritan an abomination to the Jew, and led to the fact that "the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." The healing of the lepers and the gratitude of the Samaritan; the conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well; the parable

of the good Samaritan, etc., take on new point and meaning when we remember these conditions.

It is interesting to note that a colony of Samaritans still exists on Mount Gerizim, keeping up its ritual. Their worship was based upon a translation of the Pentateuch, or first five books of the Bible, and closely resembled, therefore, that of the Jews.

THE SADDUCEES

Antiochus Epiphanes, as we have seen, sought to convert the Jews from their love of their own country to love of Greece and to introduce Greek ideas and practices into Palestine. There were many of the Jews who supported this movement, seemingly hoping to gain more from their connection with the great world powers than from their own national ideals. These came to be known as the "Sadducees," and in the time of the Maccabees, and later, contested with the Pharisees the political control of the nation. They were the liberalizing element. Coupled with their liberal political views were correspondingly liberal religious views. Among their beliefs were:

(1) That human free agency was the only explanation of human actions.

(2) They rejected oral traditions, or the comments and rules handed down by word of mouth, and accepted only the written Scriptures.

(3) They denied the doctrine of the resurrection.

Their attitude was one of absolute freedom from tradition and of liberty of thought and speech, excepting only from this liberty the written word.

THE PHARISEES

These were the hereditary enemies of the Sadducees. The liberal tendencies of these latter were bitterly opposed by a large section of the nation, and to these the name "Pharisee" was given. Their attitude was one of the deepest reverence for, and devotion to, the Jewish national and religious ideals. They opposed with all their strength the efforts to introduce Greek ideas, and not unnaturally, as a consequence, became the reactionary party. For them the old things were the only good things. They were largely the saviors, during this period, of Jewish patriotism, but in performing this office they shut

their minds to new truth. The Sadducees, by contrast, counted the new as good, and thus failed to rightly estimate either the good that was in the old or the bad that was in the new.

Religiously, this attitude resulted in a fixed and traditional form of worship, including not only loyalty to the written Word, but also to every comment and tradition that had the weight of age on its side. The Mosaic law was their basis, and this was strictly and literally interpreted, although in common with the Sadducees, they had forgotten the spiritual truths on which the law was founded. Josephus enumerates among their beliefs the following:

(1) That some actions are due to fate, some to human choice.

(2) That tradition, as well as the written word, was binding.

(3) That there is a resurrection.

It will be seen, therefore, that both the Sadducees and Pharisees held systems of belief in which truth and error were mingled, and it is no wonder that when Jesus came preaching the simple purity and liberty of the gospel, he should have found himself opposed by both parties.

2. SYNAGOGUE WORSHIP

The worship system of the Old Testament centered around three buildings—the tabernacle first; then, when that was destroyed, the temple of Solomon at Jerusalem; and, after the return from the exile, the temple of Zerubbabel. As this period was drawing to a close, Herod the Great sought the goodwill of the Jews by building a great temple to take the place of that erected by Zerubbabel. This temple was standing during the ministry of Jesus, and is the one to which the references to the temple in the New Testament are made.

At some time during the period, however, there had also arisen the practice of holding religious services in places other than the temple, and by New Testament times every city and village had its place of worship, the synagogue. In places remote from Judea also the practice was followed, so that Paul could always find Jews at the synagogues when he wanted to preach to them.

These synagogues were not designed to take the place of the temple and its worship, but to supplement it, and

their services seem to have been much on the order of a modern church service, with an exposition of the scripture by a rabbi or teacher forming the principal part. It will be remembered that Jesus, on at least one occasion, expounded a passage from the Old Testament under these circumstances. The presence of the synagogue was a large factor in keeping alive among the Jews a knowledge of God's Word, and it also played its part in providing everywhere an opportunity for Jesus and his disciples to meet with the Jews and proclaim the gospel.

3. THE SANHEDRIN

This was the Supreme Court, so to speak, of the Jews; its jurisdiction, however, covering Judea only. It had its forerunner in the Seventy Elders appointed to assist Moses, but as a strong and influential body it took its rise during this period. By New Testament times it had come to have jurisdiction over all cases of breach of law, especially the religious law, and the right of imposing penalties for crime, capital punishment, however, being reserved for the Roman governor. Its president was the high priest. It was before this body that the first trials of Jesus took place.

4. THE APOCRYPHA

This is a body of writings, the inspiration of which is admitted by neither the Jews nor the Protestant world. It consists of sixteen books, part giving an account of history and happenings during this period, and sayings and beliefs held during the period, and part forming additions to certain of the books of the Old Testament. Some of these books have historical value, but much of their content is so plainly superstitious and out of harmony with the rest of Scripture that we do not admit them as inspired. At the same time, we do value them as giving light on the period now under consideration. The Roman Catholic system, however, accepts eleven of them as genuine and inspired.

III. In Language

The language of Old Testament times was Hebrew. The New Testament was written in Greek. The reason for this was the work of Alexander the Great. His conquests of the Eastern nations and the marching of his

armies through the Eastern lands, had brought all these lands in contact with the Greek tongue, and it became the international language of his day. His death and, in turn, the rise of the Roman power, did not affect this situation, and so New Testament times found the whole Roman empire linked together by this common speech, though each nation, of course, retained also its own national tongue.

The period, therefore, had made valuable preparation for the coming of the gospel. Rome's dominion meant, during the New Testament period, stable and widespread government; safety in travel; good roads; a universal language (Greek); a wide culture. It is hard to estimate the part which these things played in making it possible for the gospel message to be carried far and wide.

RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS

This brief sketch would not be complete without pointing out that during this period occurred the golden age of Greek thought and philosophy. The philosophers of Greece had turned their attention to the study of the ultimate cause of existence. A Jew, Aristobulus, undertook an interpretation of the Old Testament in such a way as to find in it the philosophical system of Aristotle, one of the greatest of the Greek philosophers. Another Jew, Philo, carried this further, and in the course of his discussions made frequent use of the term *logos*, or *word*, which he held was an image or shadow of God. John in his gospel, uses this term to denote the Son of God.

We are told that among both Jews and Gentiles there was a widespread expectation of the coming of a Deliverer, and the time was ripe for his birth. The bigoted formalism that marked the religious leaders of Jesus' day, and that set itself in absolute opposition to the work of the gospel, had a terrible crime to answer for.

SUMMING UP

1. The political changes which took place during this period accomplished some things which made for the spread of Christianity in the next period. Among them were:

(1) A stable government under which travel was safe all over the civilized world.

(2) Good roads, built by the Romans for military purposes, but playing their part in the work of the gospel by making travel possible everywhere.

(3) The dispersion of the Jews among the various countries, not in banishment, but often of their own free will because of advantages to be gained. This meant little Jewish colonies all over the Roman empire to which the disciples, especially Paul, appealed first, and so obtained a hearing for the gospel.

2. Religiously, the world was ready for Christianity. The experiences of all the previous years had not been altogether lost. We have seen that the leading religious parties were in opposition to each other and had largely lost the true spirit of religion, but there was present in the hearts of men and women a longing for something more satisfying than the traditions of the elders, and when Jesus came speaking with authority there was, at least at first, a willingness to hear him.

Outside of the nation there was a similar experience, and men were looking and longing for the coming of some religious leader who should help them.

Perhaps this general longing is best illustrated by the visit of the Magi, when they brought their gifts and laid them at the feet of Jesus. They had seen his star in the east, and the Jewish leaders knew just where he was to be born. Simeon knew also that he should not die until he had "seen the Lord's Christ."

3. A common and beautiful language was spoken throughout the world, so that the messages of the apostles and their followers could be heard and understood everywhere and their writings could be received and read in all lands.

TEACHING OUTLINE

This period comprises the 400 years between the Testaments. Three lines of change and development took place during the period:

I. IN POLITICS

Possession and control of Palestine passed successively through the hands of:

Persia	536 to 331 B.C.
Greece	331 to 167 B.C.
The Maccabees	167 to 63 B.C.
Rome	63 B.C. to New Testament.

II. IN RELIGION

The period saw the rise of new religious parties and factors:

The new parties included:

The Samaritans.

The Sadducees.

The Pharisees.

Synagogue worship came to supplement temple worship.

The Sanhedrin arose as the chief court of Jewish justice.

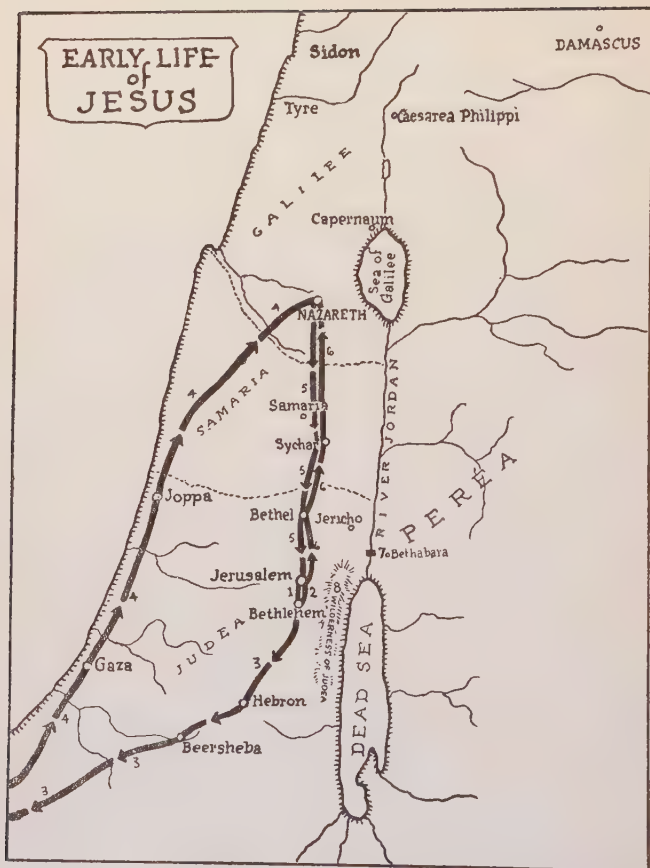
The Apocrypha, or doubtful books, included by Catholics but rejected by Jews and others, were written.

III. IN LANGUAGE

Greek had come to be the world language of its day, thus giving a channel for world preaching of the gospel.

At the time of Jesus, moreover, in religion and philosophy, there was an expectation and preparation for the coming of a *Deliverer*.

These 400 years had, therefore, not been lost in preparing the way for the *Messiah*.



EARLY LIFE OF JESUS

1, 2, to Jerusalem and return; 3, into Egypt; 4, from Egypt to Nazareth; 5, 6, to Jerusalem and return at 12; 7, baptism; 8, temptation.

II

FROM THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST TO THE WILDERNESS TEMPTATION

Scripture Passages—Matthew 1: 1—4: 11; Mark 1: 1-13; Luke 1:1—4: 13; John 1: 1-18.

We saw, at the close of our brief survey of the period between the Testaments, that the time was ripe for the coming of the Messiah, whose advent was the great hope held out to the Jews in Old Testament times.

THE PROMISE OF THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

About the year B.C. 5, for it is now admitted that by an error in calculation the birth of our Lord was formerly thought to have taken place some four years later than it did, the promise of a son was made to Zacharias, a priest, and Elisabeth, his wife. This godly couple had grown old in the Lord's service, but there was one deep sorrow in their lives; they were childless. They could not know that God was reserving for them the honor of becoming the parents of the forerunner of the promised Messiah. One day, as Zacharias was performing the duties that fell to his lot as priest, he was startled by the appearance of the angel Gabriel, who announced that Elisabeth should give birth to a son, who should prepare the way for the Lord. When Zacharias, in natural wonder at such a promise, hesitated to believe, and asked for a sign, it was given him and he was stricken dumb, a sign that was to continue until the birth of the child. He was also given the name by which the child should be called. When he returned to the people they recognized that he had seen a vision.

THE PROMISE OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS

About six months later Gabriel was sent on a similar errand to a young woman, named Mary, of the tribe of Judah, a kinswoman of Elisabeth. This time his message

was that Mary was to become the mother of the long-predicted Messiah, and the wondrous mystery of the virgin birth was made known to her. The simple submission of Mary to the will of God, and her joy at the thought of the honor that was being conferred upon her, are beautifully told by Luke. It is interesting to notice the fact that Luke was a doctor and as such would have been one of the last men in the world to accept the story of the virgin birth, unless indeed it had actually happened. At the time of the angel's visit to Mary she was not married, though she was betrothed to Joseph, a lineal descendant of the great king David. When the wedding was held, Joseph, finding that Mary was soon to become a mother, purposed to privately divorce her, but abandoned his purpose when a heavenly messenger revealed to him the nature of the Child who should be born. Around the birth of Jesus cluster the records of several of these heavenly visitations, and, naturally, for heaven and earth were vitally concerned in the Child who should be born. During this period, also, Mary visited Elisabeth, and the two women, so signally honored of God, rejoiced together over their honors.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

In due time John was born, and his birth was the occasion of a great festive gathering of the friends and neighbors of his parents. To the surprise of these friends the name given to him by his mother was a strange one, appearing not at all among his family connections. When they turned to Zacharias to ask his will, he wrote down the name "John," and, regaining immediately the power of speech, gave utterance to a song of rejoicing and prophecy.

The child was to grow up, according to the angelic announcement, a total abstainer from wine and strong drink, and though the mention of him in the gospel narratives is very scant, we know that he did grow up more or less a wanderer, not dwelling in cities and houses, but frequenting the fields and woods until, in the course of time, he began to announce the coming of the Christ.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

God put it into the heart of the Roman emperor to undertake a regular and systematic census of his realm.

Such a census fell at the time when Jesus was to be born. In accordance with the plans made, Mary and Joseph journeyed from their home at Nazareth, in Galilee, down to the little city of Bethlehem, a few miles south of Jerusalem, the town of David's birth long centuries before. Arriving at Bethlehem, they found the inn crowded and were lodged in a stable, which was being used temporarily to accommodate the overflow of guests. There Jesus was born and, wrapped in swaddling clothes, was laid in the manger. In these lowly surroundings the Lord of heaven and earth began that earthly career which was to find such checkered experiences and was to end at last in Calvary's cross and Olivet's glory.

THE ANGELIC MESSAGE TO THE SHEPHERDS

Very soon the first worshipers came to pay their homage to the infant King. Was there any significance in the fact that it was shepherds who first knelt in adoration before him who was afterwards to call himself "The Good Shepherd"? To them, as they watched their flocks by night, came the sudden blaze of glorious light, and the message of the angel that in Bethlehem had been born a Savior, the Christ (or Messiah), the Lord, who should be known to them by the swaddling clothes and the manger. The angel's message was hardly over when a choir of angels suddenly appeared and sang their song of glory to God and of peace on earth among men in whom God is pleased. Small wonder that when the angel visitors had gone away the shepherds should hasten to Bethlehem, and when they had seen and worshiped the infant Jesus, should return to their tasks on the hills worshipping and praising God. Small wonder, also, that Mary, to whom had now come the fulfilment of the angelic promise, should ponder long and deeply the visit of the shepherds and the tidings of the angelic visitation.

PRESENTATION OF JESUS AT THE TEMPLE

In accordance with the Jewish law, which Jesus had come to fulfil, he was, at the age of eight days, circumcised, and a little later, when the days of ceremonial purification were ended, he was carried to the temple and presented to the Lord. This presentation was the signal for outbursts of joy and praise and prophecy on the part of both Simeon and Anna. There were those in Israel

whose hopes were centered longingly on the Messianic predictions, and these two, knowing that the predictions were now being fulfilled, were inspired to sing and prophesy.

Contrary to the order of events usually accepted, I incline to place at this point the statement of Luke that they returned to their own city Nazareth, and to believe that it was on a subsequent visit to Bethlehem, possibly a year or two later, that the next incident occurred. The order of events here, however, is not certain.

THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN

The lands to the east of Palestine, and notably Persia and Media, had long been famed for their astrologers, men who studied the stars and professed through them to be able to read human destiny. To some of these astrologers, how many we know not, though tradition says three, there appeared about this time a strange star which they recognized as that signalling the birth of the King of the Jews. It may well be that the ancient prediction of Balaam that a Star should rise out of Jacob, had long been an expected event to these star students and worshipers, and to them, now, God sent the intimation that the King was born. At any rate they followed the star through the long journey from the East to Jerusalem, and there thought their quest was ended, for this was the capital city of the Jews. Their inquiries as to the birthplace of the One whom they sought, and their references to the star, came finally to the ears of Herod, that Herod the Great, the son of Antipater, who was the first king of the Jews in New Testament times. Feigning sincerity and the desire and purpose of worship, he succeeded in finding out from the Wise Men when the star had first made its appearance to them, and in extracting a promise from them that when they had found the child they should acquaint him of his whereabouts. Then, passing on to them the information he had gained from the Jewish scholars, that Bethlehem was to be the Messiah's birthplace, he dismissed them.

On leaving Herod, they found the star once more leading them. In great joy they followed it to Bethlehem, and there, entering the house where Joseph and Mary and the Child were staying, they worshiped and presented their rare and costly gifts, emblematic of that time when the

nations of the earth shall bring their treasures and lay them at the feet of our Lord and King. They did not, however, return to Herod, but, warned of God in a dream, returned by another route to their home country.

THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT

By a similar warning, Joseph was induced to take Mary and Jesus and to flee to Egypt, where he remained until the death of Herod a few years later. By this means Jesus was delivered from the massacre of the infants ordered by Herod in the effort to slay the Child, who, he feared, was destined to take from him his kingdom, a massacre fully in line with what is known of the violence and cruelty of his last years.

THE RETURN TO GALILEE

On the death of Herod Joseph was directed of God to return to Judea. He seems first to have headed for Bethlehem, but finding that country under the rule of Archelaus, a son of Herod who followed in the cruel and violent steps of his father, he turned aside to his old home in Nazareth in Galilee. Here Jesus grew up, and found favor with God and men.

A comparison of the gospel accounts of these events will show how wonderfully prophecy was fulfilled in them, even apparently contradictory predictions being harmonized in the events of these early years.

THE VISIT TO THE TEMPLE

Once only is the veil raised on the years in which Jesus was being prepared for his short but so significant life-ministry. The Mosaic law required that three times in the year all the males should journey to Jerusalem for sacrifice and worship. One of these occasions was the Feast of the Passover. We are told that at the age of twelve years Jewish boys were considered old enough to attend this feast, that it marked their attainment of the age of responsibility. At this age Jesus accompanied Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover. Nothing unusual seems to have occurred during the feast, but after it was over and Joseph and Mary were returning with a company of their neighbors to their home in Nazareth, they discovered at the close of the first day's journey that the boy Jesus was not in the

company. When this fact had been assured, they returned to Jerusalem to seek him, supposing him to have been lost in the city. After thorough search they were amazed to find him in the temple conversing with the teachers of the Jewish law, and showing such knowledge and understanding of that law as to amaze those that heard. Thus early was being demonstrated the fact that he was no ordinary child. To Mary and Joseph, however, he was just their twelve-year-old boy, and his mother rebuked him for staying behind and bringing anxiety to them. It is a disputed point of interpretation at just what age Jesus came to be conscious of his deity, but certainly his answer to his mother on this occasion showed that he was conscious that in some way his life must be unusual, God's matters were to be the supreme matters of his life. In filial submission, however, he turned and accompanied Joseph and Mary back to Nazareth, where he remained in retirement, yet developing in wisdom, stature and grace. The veil that covers the events of these years was promptly dropped again.

Tradition has peopled these early years with stories of Jesus, some beautiful, some fantastic, but the stories are not reliable. All we can know is found in the Scripture statements as to his development and in the general customs of the Jews. From these, and from a reference in Mark 6: 3, it is certain that Jesus grew up to follow the trade of his father, and became himself a carpenter. Thus Jesus, who in his birth sanctified motherhood and babyhood, in his early manhood sanctified labor.

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The years of silence were at last broken by the ministry of John the Baptist. Apparently he appeared suddenly and began to proclaim a strange message, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." His striking message, as it boldly stated the near approach of that Kingdom, his clear call for repentance rather than the ceremonial observance of the law, his wild bearing and rough clothing, created an immediate sensation, and soon crowds of people, from cities and villages and countryside, were flocking into the wilderness of Judea to see and to hear the strange preacher. Nor was the wonder lessened

when they came to hear more of his message. To those who asked what form their repentance must take he answered clearly and sharply that they must abandon completely those forms of sin for which they were most notorious; the multitudes were told to share their clothing and food with the needy; the tax-gatherers were exhorted not to exact more from the people than they were justly entitled to; the soldiers were forbidden to use violence and injustice in carrying out their duties. So striking were both messenger and message, and so truly did he go to the very heart of their sins, that many of his hearers at once joined themselves to him as disciples and were baptized of him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.

John's message of repentance, however, was not the whole, nor even the greater part of his message. That came in the strange declaration that after all he was but the voice, the forerunner, announcing the coming of the One with whom they had to deal. Denying that he was the Christ,* he let them know that the Christ stood among them unknown. How strange that message must have sounded. All their expectation of the Messiah was of One who should come in power and glory to restore to Israel her former place of power and influence, and to place her upon even higher planes. How could this message be true, that already he was there, and they did not know him! But still the message rang out that so it was; and the country was stirred to its depths by the preaching of this strange character.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

Then one day, as John was baptizing, there walked out to him from the crowd One in whose presence he felt abashed and ashamed. We do not know whether Jesus and John had met before, though they were kinsmen, but as they now met, there was that in the face or bearing or expression of Jesus that made John know that here was no soldier or tax-gatherer or sinner, but One of such noble and godly character that he himself was wholly unworthy to baptize him, that he needed rather to be baptized by him. We know that he did not at this time know

*The word "Christ" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah." Both mean "The Anointed One."

him to be the Messiah because a little later he said so himself. Quietly, however, did Jesus insist on the ceremony being performed, asserting that in that act righteousness was to be performed, or perhaps that submission to that act as the will of God was the spirit that should be present in all acts. Then, as John, protesting no longer, buried beneath the water the form of the Messiah, and raised him up again, came the heavenly commendation of the act, as the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove and abode upon him, and the voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Then, too, John knew that this was the One whose coming it had been his mission to declare.

We pause a moment ere we leave this scene. How could it be necessary for Jesus to be baptized? Why was it that then the Spirit came, then the voice spoke, then John recognized his Lord? Perhaps the simplest explanation is that Jesus was standing on the threshold of his great life-task and so for him there needed to be that solemn ceremony that typified the step from the quiet home life at Nazareth, now forever left behind, to the turmoil and sorrow and suffering of his active ministry, and, also, that day, just three short years away, when his body should go down into the grave, to rise again victorious over death. So to us, too, the ordinance has solemn and sacred meaning as it pictures our death to the old life of sin and our rise to the new life of righteousness; and pictures also, our own death and the resurrection that through the work of Jesus shall some day be ours. How fitting, then, that this symbol should come with him, as with us, at the beginning of the new experience.

THE WILDERNESS TEMPTATION

The public inauguration of Jesus was followed immediately by the forty days of temptation in the wilderness. This period of temptation was a part of the necessary preparation for his life-work, the final act in that preparation. The forty days were spent in loneliness and fasting. We stand on holy ground here. God has not seen well to let us pry with curious eyes upon the intense and sacred heart experiences of Jesus during this time. Is it too much to suppose that during these days there was coming to Jesus the final consciousness of his mission and

of the suffering and shame that should mark it, and the Cross that should end it? Here, perhaps, for the first time there was fully revealed to him the bitter agony of Calvary, and the unfolding steps that should reach that goal. Is it any wonder, if this surmise is correct, that food and drink were forgotten during those days, or that at the end of them the spiritual exaltation should have left him faint and hungry and physically unfit for that series of temptations into which, with diabolical cunning, Satan led him?

Matthew and Luke do not give the three temptations in the same order, but they do give the three. With what force must the temptations have come. The suggestion of making bread must have appealed with striking force to the hungry Messiah; the appeal to throw himself down from the temple and so, in a spectacular way, to initiate his life-ministry, must have come with peculiar force to One whose rejection was already assured because he came "despised" and unknown. The call to bow down and worship and so to receive the kingdoms of the world without a struggle, must have opened up a vista of escape from the agonies of the way to One whose eyes, perhaps, had just gazed upon their unfolding. And all through ran the subtle suggestion of doubt, "If thou be the Son of God." In very truth the hope of all men was hanging in the balance, and how great should be our love for Christ that he never wavered, but there, at the outset of his ministry, fought and conquered, single-handed, the fierce and cunning assaults of Satan. How grateful to the soul and body of Jesus, weary and faint from fasting and ecstasy and battle, must have been the ministry of the angels that immediately followed.

So Jesus came to the threshold of his life-work, with his claims assured at the baptism, his heart enlightened during the forty days, and victory assured, though not yet fully won, by the outcome of the temptations. Here indeed is One worthy of all love and trust and service.

TEACHING OUTLINE

This period covers the first thirty years of the earthly life of Jesus. The following incidents are included:

1. THE ANNUNCIATIONS.

The Promise of the Birth of John the Baptist, given to Zacharias, the priest, while he was ministering in the temple, and accompanied by the sign of his dumbness and the command as to the name to be given to the child.

The Promise of the Birth of Jesus, given to Mary, of the line of David, a kinswoman of Elisabeth, and the affianced bride of Joseph, also of the line of David.

2. THE BIRTHS.

The Birth of John the Baptist. The giving of his name being followed by the restoration of speech to his father, Zacharias.

The Birth of Jesus, at Bethlehem in Judea, in a manger in the stable of the inn.

3. INCIDENTS AT THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

The Message of the Angels to the Shepherds, announcing to them the birth of the Savior.

The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, fulfilling Jewish law and giving occasion for the rejoicing of Simeon and Anna.

The Visit of the Wise Men, who came from the East to pay tribute to the King of the Jews, and were guided by the Star to Bethlehem.

The Visit to the Temple, occurring when Jesus was twelve years old.

Closing Events in Preparation of Jesus:

The Ministry of John the Baptist, who came in the wilderness preaching repentance and the near approach of the Messiah.

The Baptism of Jesus, taking place in the Jordan and being marked by the descent of the Holy Spirit and the Father's commendation.

The Wilderness Temptation, the opening battle with Satan when Jesus proved victorious over all the tempter's wiles.

III

FROM THE TEMPTATION TO THE CALL OF THE TWELVE

The wilderness temptation marked a turning point in our Lord's life. From it he went forth to take up the toils and tasks for which he had come to earth. In the section of his life covered in this chapter he was carrying on this work by himself, presenting himself as their Messiah to the Jewish people. At its close, when events had shown that the Jews were not ready to accept him, he associated with himself the twelve, and began a new phase of his life work.

I. A Preliminary Tour of Judea and Galilee

(John 1: 19—2: 12)

Following the temptation there came a brief period in which Jesus journeyed through Judea and Galilee before publicly presenting himself as the Messiah.

John gave his witness to him and as a result two of his disciples, one of whom was Andrew, and the other probably John, left him and became disciples of Jesus. Passing into Galilee, Jesus found Philip and Nathanael. These four did not yet, apparently, give up their ordinary occupations to follow Jesus, but they did become his disciples, and a little later formed part of the band of twelve who became his more immediate companions. During this tour also there took place the first miracle, when at the marriage feast at Cana in Galilee Jesus turned the water into wine. From Cana, with his mother and brothers and disciples, he went to Capernaum, where from this time on he made his headquarters, his home so far as he had a home.

This brief tour, then, saw the beginnings of his public ministry, and the gathering together of some of those who were later to become his close companions, to whom at

last he was going to commit the tasks of the Kingdom when he himself should be crucified.

II. Jesus Publicly Presents Himself as the Promised Messiah

(Matthew 4: 12-22; Mark 1: 14-20; Luke 4: 14—5: 11; John 2: 13—4: 54)

Returning to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover, an occasion at once presented itself for Jesus to publicly assume the rights of his position as the Messiah. Under the formalism which had come to mark the Jewish worship the courts of the temple had been turned into a public market. The Mosaic law had provided that when a man lived at a distance from the tabernacle he could, in certain cases, sell his offering, and with the money, on arriving at the tabernacle, purchase such animals as he wished to offer. This provision had been presumed upon and the buying and selling had encroached into the very courts of the temple itself, where undoubtedly, as is stated on a later occasion, cheating and stealing were carried on as an accepted part of the situation. This condition of things aroused the anger of Jesus, and with the scourge of cords he cleansed the temple. Challenged as to his authority, he answered with the prediction of his resurrection, couched in words not understood even by his disciples at the time, and which became at last the basis for his condemnation by the Jewish authorities. Other signs also he did at this time, though we do not know what they were, the only record being John's words, "Many believed on his name, beholding his signs which he did." At the outset therefore he found among the Jews a certain number who accepted his claims.

Among these was one of the rulers, Nicodemus, who had evidently been deeply impressed by the signs and words of Jesus. Apparently fearing that a public visit to Jesus would compromise his position, and evidently not yet ready to fully acknowledge the claims of Jesus, he came to him by night. The conversation that ensued laid bare the heart of the ruler, and showed to him the truth that must ever stand as the basis of all Christian experience, that only through the new birth can a man know or see God. We have no record that at this time Nicodemus fully accepted Jesus, but he appears in the story on two later occasions, once when he sought to hold back

the Sanhedrin from violence toward Jesus, and once when with Joseph of Arimathea he sought to pay respect to the body of Jesus after the crucifixion.

The immediate popularity of Jesus was not wholly pleasing to the disciples of John the Baptist. A dispute between them and the Pharisees was made the occasion for a complaint to John that Jesus was becoming tremendously popular. It is a tribute to the character of John and his devotion to his mission that he showed no resentment but only expressed his joy in the reception his Master was receiving. Jesus, however, was very tender in his dealings with John, and, knowing that the Pharisees would make it hard for John should that condition continue, he removed to a more remote place.

Apparently at this point he decided to go to Galilee, and on the way paused at Sychar. The regular route of travel from Jerusalem to Galilee was east of the Jordan, to avoid passing through the country of the Samaritans, between whom and the Jews, as we have already seen, there was hereditary enmity. The general explanation of the route chosen by Jesus at this time is that he planned to meet the woman of Samaria. Reaching Jacob's well, the disciples went into the nearby city to purchase food. While they were absent a woman drew near the well, and with her Jesus entered into conversation. She was a poor, depraved, sinful woman, one with whom it was accounted a shame to associate or converse, but to her amazement Jesus, a Jew, spoke to her and asked for a drink of water. It was Jesus' way of opening the conversation, and step by step he led her to the belief in himself. The conversation is a lesson on personal work. Time and again the woman sought to evade the issue, but Jesus kept to the main thought and in the end the woman went hurriedly to the city and told her news. Meanwhile the disciples had returned, but the hunger and weariness of Jesus had vanished at the touch of that lost soul, and his reply to the disciples sought to open their eyes also to the ripe harvest awaiting his servants. How much we need today this vision of the whitened harvest fields, and the spirit of devotion to the work of our Lord and King.

After a stay of two days, Jesus continued his journey to Galilee, leaving behind in Samaria a band of believers.

Reaching Galilee, he began at once to preach the nearness of the Kingdom of heaven, and so entered there also publicly upon his work.

At Cana of Galilee, where the miracle of turning the water into wine had marked his preliminary tour, he now healed the son of the nobleman, and, passing to Nazareth, made public claim to be the promised Messiah. His cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem asserted his authority there. Here at Nazareth, the home of his boyhood, he asserted the fulfilment in himself of Old Testament prophecy. What a pity his neighbors did not look further into the matter! but no! with anger and wrath at his assumed presumption they sought his death. This was not so much a settled antagonism to his claims, such as arose later, but the impulsive reaction of men who thought him madly presumptuous. It was a prophecy, however, of the attitude that would finally be taken by his countrymen. From Nazareth he went to Capernaum, a city on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Here he called the four disciples, two, if not all, of whom had accepted him at the time of John's testimony.

In this tour, therefore, Jesus passed a second time through the whole country, and in each section, Judea, Samaria and Galilee, he asserted his claims. It was, perhaps, prophetic, that of the three sections, two, his own people, received those claims with suspicion and opposition, and only in Samaria was he accepted and believed.

III. A Period of Miracle Working

(Matthew 4: 23-25; 8: 1-17; 9: 2-8; Mark 1: 21—2: 12; Luke 5: 12-26)

For some time now the record of the Gospels shows Jesus engaged in working miracles. In Capernaum he cured the demon-possessed man in the synagogue and healed Peter's mother-in-law, and then, as the evening approached, there took place the first recorded instance of wide general healing. The news of his work had spread abroad, and from all around men brought their sick and their suffering. The compassionate heart of Jesus yearned over the scene that met his eyes, and in the warmth of that compassion he healed them. It was a glad night to many in that city, but how many really loved and

appreciated him who had healed them, or cared for his claim to be the Messiah?

From Capernaum Jesus now undertook a tour through Galilee, and we have the record of his threefold work, teaching, preaching and healing, a threefold ministry that has been handed on to his followers through all the ages until he shall come back again. Small wonder that the crowds followed him, and his progress was accompanied with ever-increasing multitudes, as his fame spread and sick and demoniac were healed at a touch or a word.

Among those that came to him was a leper, and it is, perhaps, because of the nature of that disease that this incident is singled out for special description. Leprosy was common in those countries and was counted among the most horrible of their diseases. No cure was known for it, and, because it was contagious, people shunned the leper. But as this poor, afflicted man came to Jesus, none could have marked a look of disgust or shrinking in that face. His great heart was touched and, moved with compassion, he touched and healed the leper. So was being manifested that divine power which rested in Jesus, though few of those that were healed recognized it. At last the crowds became so great and insistent that Jesus withdrew from them into the wilderness. It opens a door into his heart when we read that he prayed. How close and tender was the relation between him and the Father. The experiences of those days of popular excitement and great crowds and miracles of healing had brought the need of a new touch with God. What a lesson for us!

Returning to Capernaum, he seems to have remained quiet for a few days; and then one day, as he was teaching, a palsied man was brought to him. So great was the crowd that no entrance could be found by way of the door, but the persistence of his friends was rewarded when they succeeded in lowering him from the roof into the presence of Jesus. Here we have the first mutterings of that storm of hatred which was later to reach its climax in the shoutings which decided the course of Pilate, the Roman governor. Jesus had prefaced his healing work with words of forgiveness for the man's sin, but such words aroused reasonings and questionings in the hearts of the scribes and Pharisees. However, the

matter seems to have passed off quietly in the amazement produced by the healing of the palsied man.

IV. The Beginning of Opposition

(Matthew 9: 9-34; 12: 1-21; Mark 2: 13—3: 19; 5: 22-43; Luke 5: 27—6: 16; John 5: 1-47)

The rumble of opposition noticed in the last incident soon became stronger. While still in Capernaum Jesus, passing through the streets, saw and called Matthew Levi, a tax-collector. Leaving his work, Matthew at once followed Jesus. He seems to have been, in common with others of his class, a rich man, his money having been accumulated from his tax collecting. In the joy of his heart he made a great feast for Jesus and invited a large number of his old associates. Jesus did not hesitate to dine with this motley group, and his actions stirred the animosity of the scribes and Pharisees. It was a thing unheard-of that a man claiming to be a religious teacher should be seen in such company, and they made it a point of objection to him. The life and teaching of Jesus were already making them uncomfortable. As distinguished from their own religion of formalism, he proclaimed a vital religion and the interest of God in every creature he had made. It was not surprising, therefore, that they should early have sensed the menace of his teaching to their interests, and we find them intent on seizing every pretext for discrediting him and his work. The present opportunity offered a fine chance for doing this. The Master's answer only emphasized the difference between their system and his.

But it was not in the minds of the Pharisees only that the actions of Jesus and his disciples caused difficulty. The custom was for religion to be taken very seriously and sadly, with many fasts and much show of mourning, but Jesus and his disciples feasted and rejoiced. The next question came from the disciples of John, who could not understand this kind of conduct. To their question Jesus returned answer showing the essential difference between his teaching and all that had gone before, and setting forth the undying truth that empty forms and ceremonies cannot hold the living truth of his gospel. Wherever it goes it breaks over ceremonial, and outward forms are powerless to hold it in.

Four miracles which followed about this time gave further occasion for the grumbling and objection of those who were fast becoming his bitter enemies. The raising to life of the daughter of Jairus, and the healing of the woman with the issue of blood, which occurred on the way to Jairus' house, were followed by the healing of the two blind men and the dumb demoniac. In the first of these the statement of Jesus that the maid only slept, by which he evidently meant to convey that they should have her with them again in health and strength, was greeted with scorn, while the last gave rise to their contemptuous explanation that he was able to cast out demons because he was in league with Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

Following the order of events as given by Broadus, we come now to a series of three incidents in which the actions of Jesus and his disciples were definitely challenged because of their apparent breaking of the Sabbath day. The first chapters of the Bible had proclaimed the sanctity of the seventh day of the week, and this ideal had been repeated in the Mosaic law. All along the intent had been that the day should be a day of rest and benefit to man. In keeping with their attitude toward other laws, however, the Pharisees had made the day a burden, and works of mercy or actions entirely harmless done on that day were seized upon as pretexts for opposing Jesus. On one Sabbath Jesus healed the impotent man by the Pool of Bethesda; on another his disciples plucked and ate the ears of grain as they passed through the fields, and on the third Jesus healed the man with the withered hand. On the last two occasions Jesus defended his actions, pointing out that their great king, David, had not scrupled to break the word of the law when occasion demanded it, and yet they did not count him guilty, and also pointing out that they themselves did not hesitate to give aid to their dumb beasts on the Sabbath day. The truth was that if it had been others who had done these things they would probably have passed unnoticed, but Jesus had by this time become the center of all eyes, and his enemies used every possible thing to stir up sentiment against him. After his answer on the last occasion two groups of these enemies, the Pharisees and the Herodians, definitely began to look for means to kill him.

The opposition had, therefore, become so definite and decided that Jesus began to turn toward the choice of men to whom he could commit his cause when the time came for him to die for the world's sin. His own people, it was becoming evident, would in time reject him. Their leaders, by whom they were swayed, had already begun to meditate his death, and it was time for men to be chosen who would carry on the work when he should lay it down.

Withdrawing to Galilee he was followed by great crowds of people. The hatred of the leaders had not yet made much, if any, impression on the people in general, to whom Jesus was still the wonderful miracle-worker, so they brought their sick to him and he healed them, thus fulfilling, as Matthew tells us, the picture of Isaiah of the healing and blessing ministry of the Messiah.

Finally, leaving the multitude, he went away to the mountain and there spent the night in prayer. The action before him was fraught with the most momentous consequences for the progress of his work, for upon the men who should be chosen to carry on that work after his own crucifixion a very heavy responsibility would rest. It is only as we look forward to the next day, when he came down and selected the twelve, that we can aright understand the night of prayer on the mountain. Even he himself felt the need of communion with God before that choice, and the great work and glorious career of eleven out of the twelve who were chosen, shows that he made no mistake in his choice.

TEACHING OUTLINE

In this period Jesus was working alone. At its close he chose the twelve and associated them with himself.

I. A PRELIMINARY TOUR OF JUDEA AND GALILEE.

Not much detail given, but saw the conversion of some who later became apostles, and his first miracle at Cana of Galilee.

II. PUBLIC CLAIM OF MESSIAHSHIP.

At the Passover Feast, when he cleansed the temple.

Shortly afterwards occurred the conversations with Nicodemus and the Samaritan woman.

In Galilee he proclaimed the nearness of the Kingdom, and healed the nobleman's son.

III. A PERIOD OF MIRACLE WORKING.

Evidently intended to impress upon men his divine power, and covering chiefly miracles of healing.

IV. THE BEGINNING OF OPPOSITION.

Here we are shown opposition by the Jewish leaders. They did not like his feasting with tax-gatherers and sinners.

They objected to his miracles of healing.

They grumbled at his attitude toward the Sabbath.

All this led to his withdrawing from the crowds, and seeking, in the night of prayer, strength and guidance for the choice of the twelve.

IV

FROM THE CALL OF THE TWELVE TO THE TRANSFIGURATION

With the call of the twelve the period of our Lord's ministry in which he was presenting himself to the whole nation as their king and Messiah came to an end. The growing hatred of the religious leaders, and their efforts to discredit him or destroy him had reached a point where it became necessary for him to provide for the carrying on of his work when he should fall victim to their hatred, a necessary part of his plans for human redemption. The calling of the twelve was his answer to this need.

I. The Sermon on the Mount

(Matthew 5, 6 and 7; Luke 6: 17-49.)

The call of the twelve, usually named the apostles, was followed by the statement of those principles and ideals which were to mark the lives of his followers. The Sermon on the Mount is not a statement of the gospel, for it nowhere contains the essential principles of repentance and faith, but it is a statement of that standard of life and conduct which, under the new covenant of grace, God is seeking from men. It takes the Mosaic laws and carries their underlying principles into the realm of the heart rather than that of outward action, thus at the same time raising them higher and carrying them into the realm of being rather than that of action. That discourse, therefore, sets forth the standard of life which man must reach if he is in himself to please God. If concerning the Mosaic standards it could be said that none had reached them, how much the more are the standards of the Sermon on the Mount above mere human attainment. Its result, therefore, properly understood, is to make still more real and vivid the need of the vicarious sufferings of our Lord. At the same time for those who have in Jesus found the secret of pleasing God, these

standards form the ideals to which we must look and toward which we must strive. We cannot here attempt a full discussion of the details of the discourse, but if it is read and studied in the light of the last few sentences it will be found to be full of deep meaning for all of us.

II. A Tour of Galilee

(Matthew 8: 1-13; 11: 2-30; Luke 7: 1—8: 3.)

The Sermon on the Mount takes its name from the fact that it was delivered on a mountain. The exact location of this mountain is not surely known, but it was in the northern part of the land. From this mountain, after the sermon had been given, Jesus descended and entered again into Capernaum. Here he found at once occasion for the exercise of his divine power of healing. A centurion, a Roman officer, sought his aid on behalf of his sick servant, and his faith showed itself greater than that of the Jews, for he felt it unnecessary for Jesus even to be present to perform the miracle. There is a touch of nobleness in the words which he used to state his own sense of unworthiness in the presence of Jesus. Jesus used the incident to set forth a truth which must have sounded strangely in the ears of the Jews, but which later was to enter more fully into his teaching, and later still to be tragically fulfilled, that the favored nation of the Jews would be set aside and to the Gentiles would be given the privileges of membership in his kingdom. Leaving Capernaum he went with his disciples to Nain, and here raised to life the son of the widow, the second of the miracles in which the dead were raised to life. How tender was the compassion of Jesus! It points out the truth that when today death enters our homes it is not because he is pleased to see us in sorrow, but because in ways that may not be clear to our limited vision that is the best thing for our loved ones and for us.

It was on this tour that the messengers of John the Baptist found him. John had been for some time a prisoner because of his bold denunciation of the licentious conduct of Herod and his wife. In the prison his proud, free spirit had fretted until the doubt had seemingly arisen whether after all the One to whom he had given witness at his baptism was the promised Messiah. If he was, would he be willing to allow his forerunner to

languish in the prison when by a word he could set him free, as he had been setting free the sick and demon-bound all over the land! At first it seems strange that in the face of the opened heavens and the Father's words at the baptism, John should ever have had any doubts, but the close confinement had made its impress on him, and John was after all only human. Jesus did not rebuke his servant, but sent the disciples back to tell him of the miracles of healing that they with their own eyes had seen and so to strengthen the faith of their master. Then turning to the crowd, Jesus made a defence of John in which the character of that great man was strikingly depicted and praised, while the cities which had seen the works both of John and his Master were warned of the fearful punishment which their own attitude of unbelief would bring upon them.

Another incident of note occurred about this time. While dining with a Pharisee a sinful woman came into the room and, standing behind Jesus, as in Eastern fashion he reclined at the table, began to weep. As she wept her tears fell on his feet, and with her hair she wiped them off, while her emotion further expressed itself in the kisses with which she accompanied that action. The whole incident is very illuminating. We are not told why the Pharisee had invited Jesus to eat with him that day; perhaps in order that he might catch him in some word or act that would enable him to denounce him to the people, as we know was done on later occasions. It is evident that the hatred of Jesus had not so far affected him as to make him unwilling to have Jesus as his guest. That he did not think of him as he should have done is evident from his omitting the usual acts of courteous welcome to which Jesus afterward called his attention. In great contrast was the attitude of the woman. Beyond any question she had either heard of him or with her own ears had heard the words of grace which he spoke, and her heart, sunk in sin as it was, responded to the love which was in his. It was with a full yet humble heart that she stood behind him, and yet with no apparent shrinking from him, but a simple trust in the love and forgiveness that he would give. And Jesus showed his recognition of the difference, first in the parable spoken to the Pharisee and then in the gracious

words of forgiveness to the woman. How little the Pharisee understood the character and purpose of his life is evident from the unuttered but yet understood thought of his heart.

III. The Opposition again Breaks Out

(Matthew 12: 22-50; Mark 3: 20-35; Luke 8: 19-21.)

A series of incidents now followed which showed the recrudescence of the spirit of hatred of the religious leaders. Returning from another tour of Galilee, he entered into a house where a dumb demoniac was healed. The multitudes were amazed, but the Pharisees and scribes again explained it by asserting that he was in league with the devil himself. This repetition of the previous charge was not allowed to pass unnoticed. Jesus took it up, and in a scathing though short speech denounced the spirit of their charge, showing at the same time its utter folly. It was in this connection that he uttered those words regarding the unpardonable sin which have caused difficulty to so many people. If they are taken in connection with the circumstances it is evident that he was not dealing with any small or thoughtless sin, but with such an attitude of heart as would lead men, in the face of all reason, to ascribe to devilish power what could only be explained as the working of the Spirit of God himself. It was not, therefore, surprising that Jesus followed it with a stern denunciation of the Pharisees and of the words to which they had given utterance.

But the hearts of these men were hardened against him, and their response to his words was the demand for a sign justifying his attitude. The only sign accorded to them was another prediction of his resurrection. Twice, therefore, this was given by Jesus as his great proof of his Deity. Their own set opposition was again sternly rebuked and the ultimate fearful condition of their hearts shown in the story of the unclean spirit who, returning to his house, found it empty, swept and garnished, and so took to himself seven other spirits worse than himself and again took up his abode there.

The hatred was becoming so serious and obvious that at this point his own family seem to have felt it was time to bring his activities to a halt. They did not yet understand that he was the Messiah, in spite of his mira-

cles, and it was apparently with the intention of trying to get him to lessen his activities and the consequent danger to himself that they now came seeking him. But Jesus knew better than they the course he must follow, and refused to go with them, uttering those words so full of meaning to his followers, that all who do his will belong to his family. Here he set forth the fact that relationship in God's family is more important than that in any human family.

IV. The First Great Group of Parables

(Matthew 13: 1-53; Mark 4: 1-34; Luke 8: 4-18.)

At this point both Matthew and Mark place what are known as the Parables of the Kingdom, or rather the first great group of those parables. Before this time Jesus had occasionally used this method of teaching but only in isolated cases. Here he grouped together several parables all centered round the thought of the Kingdom. Taking them in order as found in Matthew they were:

- The Sower and the Seed.
- The Wheat and the Tares.
- The Mustard Seed.
- The Leaven.
- The Hidden Treasure.
- The Pearl of Great Price.
- The Dragnet.

Mark and Luke add:

- The Lamp Under the Bushel.
- The Seed Growing of Itself.

These parables set forth the differing receptions accorded by men to the preaching of the Word, the false teachings that would also arise, the growth of the principles of Christianity and their influence on the world, the preciousness of the gospel, or, as many think, the preciousness to God of those who accept the gospel, and the separation between good and evil that will come at the end of the age. A study of this group of parables will throw much light on God's plans, and in our modern day, with plans of every kind being presented to us, such a study will help us to know how best to fit our lives and work into God's purposes.

V. A Visit Beyond the Sea of Galilee

(Matthew 8: 23-34; Mark 4: 35—5: 20; Luke 8: 22-39.)

The crowds which followed Jesus and listened to his words grew so large that he temporarily removed himself from them. This time he embarked with his disciples for a trip by boat across the Sea of Galilee. Wearied with the activities of the day Jesus went to sleep on a cushion in the stern of the boat. As they crossed, there sprang up one of those wild and sudden storms for which the Sea of Galilee is noted. Their situation speedily became very dangerous, but Jesus slept quietly through all the noise of the storm. Finally matters became so critical that the disciples, some of whom were fishermen from that lake and, therefore, well acquainted with the danger, awoke him and pleaded with him to save them. It was evident that they had come to place implicit faith in his power and control over all nature. In response to their appeal he rebuked the wind and the waves, and to the disciples' astonishment, a great calm at once resulted. They had believed in his power to help them, but they had not realized their absolute safety in his presence. Turning to them he spoke words not of praise for their faith in his power but of rebuke for their faint-heartedness and smallness of faith. How much we need more faith today! We believe in God's power, and so we carry all our needs to him and plead with him to supply them. Often, perchance, the very need itself is the test of our confidence in his keeping care. Not frenzied calls for his help, but quiet confidence in his love and care, is the true measure of our faith. So they reached the Eastern shore, and here Jesus met and healed the Gadarene demoniac, or demoniacs, if we follow the story as recited by Matthew. These had been so fierce that men feared to pass by that way, but in the presence of Jesus the fierce demons became quiet and obedient. Jesus granted their request that they might enter the herd of swine, and that act resulted in the swine rushing down into the sea and being drowned. Then the people of that place, with a strangely distorted sense of values, came to plead with Jesus to remove himself from their midst, valuing a herd of swine at a higher figure than the Lord of Glory! So Jesus returned to his own city, Capernaum.

VI. Further Incidents in Galilee

(Matthew 9: 35—11: 1; 13: 54—14: 12; Mark 5: 21—6: 29; Luke 8: 40—9: 9.)

Reaching Capernaum, Jesus found a crowd awaiting him. He does not appear to have stayed long in that city, but went to Nazareth, where he taught in the synagogue, as was his custom. Once before, at the opening of his public ministry, he had done this and his countrymen had sought to kill their "presumptuous" neighbor. The years had not changed their attitude, and the only result of his teaching was that again they turned away from him in scorn that he should have attained such repute. Their unbelief made it impossible for Jesus to do many great works among them.

At this point Mark places the tour of the twelve. Jesus sent them out in couples to go through the villages of Galilee where he was himself planning to go. On this trip they were given power over diseases and demons and commanded to preach the nearness of the Kingdom. The disciples were given explicit instructions as to their actions during the tour, and Jesus warned them that they would not meet always with a welcome, but encouraged them by reminding them of God's care over them. It was a momentous occasion for the twelve. Heretofore they had seen Jesus work, but had themselves been merely his companions and, on rare occasions, helpers. Here they were to go without him and were to perform in part the things they had seen him do. One element only of his mission they were not to share in, the teaching, possibly because as yet they were not sufficiently instructed themselves. They might heal the sick and preach that the Kingdom was near, but it needed much learning from Jesus yet before they could teach men the mysteries of that Kingdom. Yet they were very really getting a taste of the task that was to be theirs when their Master had been taken from them. Jesus also went on a tour alone.

The story here in Mark and Luke abruptly leaves Jesus and narrates the incident of the death of John the Baptist which evidently occurred at this time. That heroic soul had not hesitated to denounce the evil acts of the king and had, as we have seen, been cast into prison for his pains. Herod himself seems to have had some sympathy for him, or at least to have feared him enough

not to attempt any violence on his person, but his queen and her daughter nursed their hatred until at a drunken birthday feast of Herod's the opportunity came and the king's decree for the death of John the Baptist was secured. So came to an end that noble life. John had faithfully proclaimed his Lord and Master, and faithfully preached his message of repentance for sin, and now, after a long imprisonment, he has met his death. We can have but honor for his memory. He had performed his mission and now had gone to his reward.

VII. A Series of Attempted Withdrawals

(Matthew 14: 13—16: 12; Mark 6: 30—8: 26;
Luke 9: 10-17; John 6: 1—7: 1.)

The news of the death of John the Baptist evidently reached Jesus about the time that the twelve returned from their tour. Both events led to the suggestion of Jesus that he and his disciples should seek rest. The situation was evidently growing grave. The king had no longer spared the life of John, and the disciples were ready for further instruction. It seems certain that at this point Jesus determined to begin a more intensive training of the twelve, and first of all to ascertain from their own words just what estimate of him they had formed during the months and years they had spent together. With this in view he now began to seek some place of retirement where he could converse with them alone.

His first effort was made when with his disciples he crossed the Sea of Galilee to the hills on its eastern shore. But retirement was not so easy to obtain. The multitudes were not ready to part easily with the miracle-worker, whose words and works had so stirred and blessed them. They had seen the departure of Jesus and his disciples, and they followed him on foot around the shores of the lake, carrying with them their sick and afflicted. We have another insight into the heart of Jesus when we read that even at a time like this, when he so much needed rest and the opportunity for converse with the disciples, he was touched with compassion at sight of their distresses. Luke adds the striking words, "He welcomed them." Then began another scene of healing and teaching that lasted until the day began to draw to a

close. Then, with the tired, hungry multitude thronging him he undertook a task that was to test the faith and resource of his disciples and to give another signal demonstration of his own unlimited powers. The disciples also seem to have felt compassion for the hungry and tired crowd, but their sympathy took the form of a suggestion that Jesus send them away that in the villages and cities around they might secure food. We can only imagine the surprise that seized them when instead of complying with their request Jesus told them to feed the multitude. Their startled estimate of the amount of bread such a task would require helps us to understand how unprepared they were for any such suggestion, and how far from their thought was any possibility of carrying out the Master's words. Was it, after their tour, to make them conscious anew that only in close touch with him could they reach their possibilities? At any rate, they took the Master at his word and presently had seated the company in groups of fifty. Then, with the prayer of thanksgiving and blessing, Jesus began that marvelous breaking of the bread which at last supplied food and to spare, for the great multitude. What an object lesson in the infinite resources of the compassion and the power of Jesus!

When night came on Jesus sent the disciples away by boat to the Galilee shore of the lake while he retired for a season of private communion with the Father. Again a storm threatened, and this time Jesus was not with them. But as the night advanced and their peril grew greater, suddenly they beheld Jesus walking across the water. Supposing that they saw an apparition, they cried out in fear, but Jesus quieted their fears by revealing his identity to them. The impulsive character of Peter was demonstrated by the incident that followed. Not so much with the purpose of testing the reality of Jesus' presence as of going himself to the Master and sharing the experience of walking on the sea, Peter requested that Jesus should command him also to walk on the water. Jesus understood fully the heart and the action of Peter, and told him to come. With boldness Peter stepped out, but soon the howling winds and angry waves terrified him and his faith and confidence vanished. Then, as he was sinking into the water, came the abandonment of his boastfulness and the humble cry for help. Peter

had learned the lesson that he must not so presume, and in his moment of defeat Jesus reached out and helped him.

Soon they reached the shore, and the news of their return was spread abroad. Then was repeated that scene of general healing so often seen in our Master's ministry, and that spoke so eloquently both of man's common heritage of suffering and need and of the compassion and power of Christ.

The next day the multitudes who had beheld the miraculous multiplying of the loaves and fishes, and had themselves shared in the feast, found Jesus and came, inquiring curiously how Jesus had been able to cross over the lake when no boats were available. The answer of Jesus led to a discussion of the reality and need of spiritual food. The words of Jesus in which he pointed out the necessity that men should eat his body and drink his blood in order to obtain eternal life, were wholly incomprehensible to the literalistic Jews, and with murmurings they rejected all such teachings. But the Master would not soften his words in order to retain their presence or favor. There was but one way for them to have life, and if they could not or would not receive that, there could be no hope for them. So they turned away from him. It was a moment of deep pathos and of tremendous consequence when Jesus turned to the twelve with the question, "Will ye also go away?" Had they, too, found his words too hard, and had the three years of working and preaching and their constant companionship with him had no effect? We can understand a little how the heart of Jesus rejoiced when Peter answered, prophetic of that other time when from his lips as spokesman should fall the words that proclaimed their belief in himself: "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we have believed and know that thou art the Holy One of God." But his joy was shadowed by the knowledge that among even the twelve was one who was unworthy.

Meantime messengers had arrived from the scribes and Pharisees at Jerusalem to seek to entrap him in his talk. This time they took exception to the fact that his disciples were neglectful of the ceremonial washings common among the Jews before meals. The answer of Jesus brought out again the essential difference between his

teaching and theirs when he pointed out that such things as they were objecting to could make no real difference to a man, that it is the thoughts and feelings and conduct which spring from the heart that really count.

Now, seeking still that retirement in which he could reveal himself more fully to his disciples, Jesus turned his steps to the country of Phœnicia, to the northwest of Galilee. Even here his fame had preceded him and the Syrophœnician woman found healing for her daughter at his hands.

From Phœnicia he went to Decapolis, the country to the southeast of the Sea of Galilee. Here again he found sick ones to be healed, crowds gathered as at other times, and Jesus spent some days in ministering to their needs. At this time also he again fed the multitude.

His next journey was to Magadan, and here the Pharisees demanded a sign and were refused any but the sign of Jonah. As they passed again over the sea, Jesus pointed out to the twelve the need of avoiding the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees.

VIII. Peter's Confession and the Transfiguration

(Matthew 16: 13—17; 13; Mark 8: 27—9: 13; Luke 9: 18-36.)

On the eastern shore of the lake a blind man was healed, but finally with his disciples Jesus secured the privacy he had been seeking. As they went into the country adjacent to Cæsarea-Philippi, Jesus began to ask as to the general report concerning himself. When in answer they had stated the varying reports, he asked them their own conclusions. The question was fraught with the most momentous possibilities. Had the disciples gone any further than the others? Was the answer made shortly before by Peter to that other question really the expression of their belief? Or had the years failed to convince even these? Peter's answer made it clear that no matter what others might think, for him, and presumably for the others for whom he spoke, Jesus was indeed "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Small wonder that in joy Jesus proclaimed that such a conviction had only come because the Father had revealed it, and went on to speak those words concerning his church which have proved such a bone of contention between the

Catholic and Protestant world. The true interpretation is in some doubt, but the general view would hold either that the true church was founded upon the truth that Peter expressed or that it was founded upon our Lord himself. That it was not to be founded upon Peter is very evident, for immediately that disciple met with a stinging rebuke because of a presumptuous statement to his Lord.

Now the way was open for the full revelation of himself, and on the Mount of Transfiguration it was given to the chosen three, Peter, James and John, to see their Lord with a touch of his ineffable glory shining through the veil of flesh, and to listen awhile to the conversation between him and Moses and Elijah concerning his own death. Small wonder that in the ecstasy of that moment impulsive Peter should give expression to his longing to remain in such surroundings as those. But it was not to be, and the thick cloud and the Father's voice made plain that in Jesus alone was his supreme pleasure. The mountain-top experience would ever remain vivid in their minds; Peter wrote about it many years later; but now they must go down to take up again the duties of life, and to go forward to face the persecution and agony and death that awaited their Lord in Jerusalem. It is significant that as they descended the mount Jesus should speak to them of that event on which he had been conversing with Moses and Elijah, and tell them of his own death and resurrection.

TEACHING OUTLINE

The call of the twelve marked a change in the method of Jesus. From this point on he gave large place to training the apostles.

I. THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

A statement of the ethical standards of Christianity.

II. A TOUR OF GALILEE

On this tour his activities included the healing of the centurion's servant, the raising of the widow's son, the conversation with the disciples of John the Baptist, and the forgiveness of the sinful woman.

III. THE OPPOSITION AGAIN BREAKS OUT

This now took the form of accusing him of being in league with Satan, and reached such an intensity that his family feared for his life.

IV. THE FIRST GREAT GROUP OF PARABLES

Centering around the teaching of the kingdom.

V. A VISIT BEYOND THE SEA OF GALILEE

Crossing the Sea of Galilee and healing the demoniac.

VI. FURTHER INCIDENTS IN GALILEE

Including a second rejection at Nazareth and the tour of the twelve.

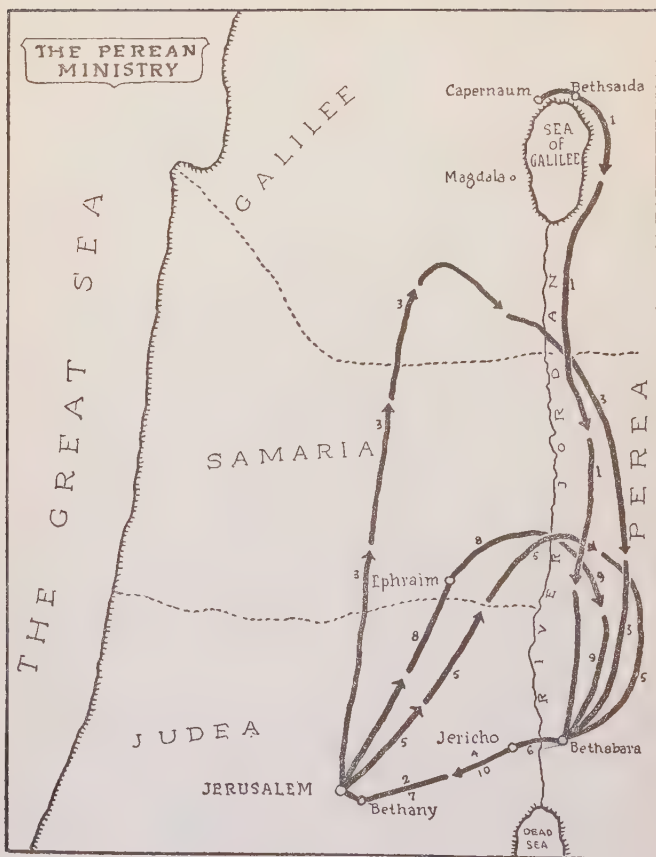
VII. A SERIES OF ATTEMPTED WITHDRAWALS

Journeys to the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, with the feeding of the 5,000 and the walking on the water; to Syrophœnicia where he healed the sick daughter; to Decapolis where many were healed; and to Magadan.

In all these places he was known.

VIII. WITHDRAWAL TO CAESAREA PHILIPPI

This journey, which secured the desired privacy, was marked by Peter's Confession and the Transfiguration. It was a turning point in the ministry of Jesus.



THE PEREAN MINISTRY

1, leaves Galilee; 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, thrice in Jerusalem; 8, visits Ephraim; 9, faces toward Jerusalem; 10, arrives in Bethany.

V

FROM THE TRANSFIGURATION TO THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

I. Private Instruction of the Twelve

(Matthew 17: 14—18: 35; Mark 9: 14-50; Luke 9: 37-62; John 7: 2-10)

When Jesus and the disciples reached the foot of the mountain, they found a crowd awaiting them with a demoniac boy who had been brought for healing. It will be remembered that only three of the disciples went up with him to the mountain. The rest of them stayed at its foot, and it was to them that the crowd had brought the boy. In the face of this need the disciples were helpless. The first thing, then, after the glory of the Transfiguration was a task of common life. Jesus healed the boy, to the wonder not only of the crowd but also of the disciples. Faced with the fact of their impotence and of the Lord's power, they asked that famous question, "Why could not we cast it out?" The answer of Jesus made it plain that such power as he showed was not to be obtained without a close fellowship with God.

They passed along now, conversing as they went, till they came to Capernaum, where the Master paid the half-shekel, as was his due as a Jew.

Reaching Capernaum, the harmony of the small band was broken by a hot discussion as to which of the disciples should be accounted the greatest. Did this contention arise because of the privilege granted to the three on the mountain? They brought their question to Jesus, who answered it by stating the law of greatness in the Kingdom, that he who serves is he who is great. He further impressed the truth by setting a little child in the midst of them, and stating that to humble oneself as a child was the secret of greatness, while to receive one such in

Jesus' name was to receive him. His words were interrupted by John, who spoke of forbidding someone to cast out demons because he did not belong to the twelve, but Jesus rebuked that spirit and returned to his words concerning the child. To injure, or to place a stumbling-block before, such a child is to commit a fearful sin. Here Jesus used a very strong picture, stating that to be cast into the sea with a great stone tied around the neck would be better than to so offend.

He seems to have seen that the time was ripe for yet further instruction, and so he spoke of the method by which Christians should deal with erring brethren. When Peter interrupted with his question as to how often forgiveness was required, Jesus showed that even to suggest a limit was to miss the whole spirit. Seventy times seven was a figure so great that certainly there could be no such count kept of the offences if each one was fully and frankly forgiven. The parable of the unforgiving servant was used to illustrate and emphasize the truth that all of us have received far more forgiveness from the hands of God than we are ever called upon to show to our brethren.

At this point Broadus places the conversations with some would-be followers. In these conversations Jesus made it very plain that he was far more concerned with the quality of his followers than with their numbers. It is worthy of note, in these days when we seek by all means to secure professing Christians, that Jesus never made the requirements of his service easy. Indeed his words at times seem almost as though he sought to repel them unless their purpose was in truth strong and sincere. Is not this, after all, the true position to take? Christians are those who, in a world that knows not God, choose him and set themselves for his service. Unless, then, we are prepared to count the cost of such service and in good faith follow him, our professions are mere empty words.

The season was now approaching when the Feast of Tabernacles was to be observed, that feast in which the Jews commemorated their wilderness wanderings. The immediate family of Jesus had not yet been convinced that he was anyone out of the ordinary, and on this occasion, with something akin to mockery in their words, they counselled him to go to Jerusalem and take advantage

of the crowds that would be gathered together there to observe the feast. But Jesus would not yield to their suggestion, though later, when they had gone, he also went.

II. Jesus Publicly Accepts the Issue

(Luke 10: 1-37; John 7: 11—10: 21)

Arriving at Jerusalem, he found the multitudes stirred and excited concerning him. His fame had spread so widely that all desired to see him, and this desire was in no way lessened by the report that their leaders were seeking to kill him. At first he was not recognized, but soon, when he challenged the actions and purposes of the crowds, he was recognized and officers were sent to seize him. Many believed on him from among the crowd, and the officers themselves were so swept away by his words that they returned empty-handed to their masters.

John here tells the incident of the woman taken in adultery. Some of the oldest copies of the Greek text do not contain the story, and it is generally regarded as doubtful whether it was included in John's original writing. It is perfectly harmonious with the rest of the Gospel, and may probably have been a true story even if not originally included.

We are coming now to a period in the ministry of our Lord when his discourses are more fully reported. It may well be said that the character of his ministry was changing. His first years would naturally be largely occupied with works of wonder, miracles, and so forth, which would tend to convince the people of his divine power and being. Now that these works were but winning for him opposition and ill-will, it is not surprising that he turned to fuller discussions, in which he sought to show himself as their hope, and in particular to give such instruction to the chosen twelve as would enable them to carry on his plans after his own death. These discourses were generally in the nature of discussion, for the hearers frequently broke in with questions or objections, but they served the purpose of setting forth the truths regarding himself.

On this next occasion the theme of his discourse was himself as the Light of the World. Once before he had spoken of himself as the Bread of Life, thus signifying the means by which men may have life. Again, he had

spoken of himself as the Water of Life. Here his claim is that he is the Light of the World. How true that statement was! Yet his claim aroused such fierce anger in the hearts of the Jews that in the end, instead of accepting him and his claims, they actually took up stones to slay him.

John gives us most of our material here. He next describes the healing of the man born blind, and the controversy that followed, first between the man and the Pharisees, and then between them and Jesus. The incident illustrates the splendid opportunism of Jesus, with what consummate skill he could seize upon an incident of his ministry and turn it into account in seeking the hearts of men. It illustrates also the unmitigated bitterness with which the enemies of Jesus had come to regard him. The man's own attitude as he mocked their flimsy reasoning was not soothing to them.

The simile of Jesus as the Good Shepherd came next. Wonderfully in this parable has Jesus set forth the tender and trustful relations that exist between him and his own. Somehow that picture, whether in David's Shepherd Psalm or here in the words of Jesus, seems peculiarly tender and appropriate.

Following still the order as outlined by Broadus, we turn now from the account in John and take up that in Luke. Thus we find placed at this point the Tour of the Seventy. We do not know who the seventy were, and we must not confuse this tour with that of the twelve, as earlier reported. There was much that was similar in the two tours, but we have the record here of the joy that gripped the heart of Jesus as they came back bringing their message of power over all.

Now begin the definite and planned efforts of his enemies to entrap Jesus in his speech. On earlier occasions they had watched his actions and listened to his words, to find if possible some occasion of fault in them. Finding none, they seem now to have turned to deliberate efforts to entrap him into some incorrect or hurtful answer, with which they might go to the crowd and discredit him. Be it remembered that it was the brightest thinkers and best scholars among them who were treating Jesus thus, and it will be readily understood how clever were their efforts, and what heavenly power and wisdom

Jesus had when, in spite of all their attacks, he was able to come out without a finger being raised against him. Truly, had he given even the slightest occasion, their wrath would soon have seized upon it.

Here the question was put by a lawyer, and referred to the chief commandment in the Jewish law. But the reply of Jesus, setting forth the twofold call of love, not only correctly answered the question, but paved the way for such a suggestion from Jesus as to put the lawyer definitely on the defensive. When in seeking to evade the difficulty he asked the question, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan and sent the lawyer away with the exhortation to follow the example of the Samaritan.

III. An Interlude of Quiet

(Luke 10: 38—11: 13)

Jesus now retired to Bethany, the home of Martha and Mary, for rest. While there the natures of the two sisters were brought out by their respective conduct, Mary choosing to sit at the feet of Jesus in conversation, while Martha was concerned over caring for the physical welfare of our Lord. To Martha it seemed that Mary was getting an unfair advantage and shirking her share of the work, so she took the matter to Jesus. His reply set forth the truth that the things of this life are not the all-important ones, after all. His words were not so much a rebuke of Martha as a defence of Mary.

An occasion now arose from which grew a needed teaching concerning prayer. The disciples saw Jesus at prayer, and there was that about his prayer which put to shame their own conceptions and practice. As he finished, they came to him asking that he should teach them. In reply he repeated that prayer which he gave as a model in the Sermon on the Mount. The fact that he should have so repeated it should make us realize that in it we have a most fruitful ground for study as to what constitutes prayer. We cannot go into it in detail in this work, but it may be noted that it begins with God before it touches the needs of self, and that even then the most fundamental needs only are included. How verbose and empty our own prayers often are. We have not yet learned the truth of those earlier words of Jesus that we are not

heard for our much speaking. The illustration that followed of the friend at midnight, shows the love and trust that should mark the prayers of the Lord's people.

IV. A Period of Conflict

(Luke 11: 14—17: 10; John 10: 22—11: 54)

The short period of rest was over, and Jesus at once found himself in the midst of a conflict with his enemies. While casting out a demon there was repeated once more the accusation that he was able to do so through being himself in league with the prince of the demons. It will be seen that nothing could change the enmity of the Jewish leaders towards himself. Jesus pointed out again that if their words were true there would of necessity be a conflict among the servants of Satan which would bring about his downfall, and went on to show the fearful consequence of having an evil spirit cast out if no positive good thing took the place of that evil which was cast out.

The next incident in this conflict came when again he was the guest of a Pharisee. Jesus neglected, as had his disciples on a previous occasion, the ceremonial washing which the Pharisees practiced. In his reply to their surprise he showed the essential hypocrisy of their life and conduct by the picture of the platter clean on the outside but unwashed on the inside. Here again he set forth that truth that had marked his preaching from the beginning, that God was more concerned over the condition of the heart than over mere outward ceremonial; that life was more important than ceremony. From this he passed to a scathing denunciation of the whole structure of Pharisaism, and when taken to task for it by a lawyer he denounced that class also. The fact that he could use such statements concerning these teachers of the law shows how depraved were their ideals and conduct.

Evidently word had gone round of what was happening, and a great crowd gathered, as crowds will at the prospect of a heated discussion. Jesus, turning to them, spoke of the evils of hypocrisy, and warned them to fear God above all, and not to be afraid of man. A man in the crowd seized the chance to lay a grievance before Jesus, and, by his help, to secure a part of the inheritance which his brother had evidently taken wholly for himself. The answer of Jesus showed how small was the

worth of the body compared with that of the soul. He urged his hearers to seek more for the things of God than for those of earth and repeated that promise given before in the Sermon on the Mount, that those who would do so would find that God would provide all needed material things. From this he went on to urge them to live as men who wait for the return of their lord, telling them that just in that way should they face all life, that the Son of Man would also return at a time when he was not expected and that they would do well to be ready for his coming when it took place.

From this point on, the opposition seems to have been almost unceasing until that time when Jesus finally retired from the scene to spend the last evening with the twelve.

The healing of the woman bowed down with infirmity was objected to because it was done on the Sabbath. The Feast of Dedication was the occasion for a definite attack on him and his teachings. Finally, he went over Jordan into the country of Perea, but even here the Pharisees followed him and sought to get him to leave the country by telling him of Herod's plans to kill him. The answer of Jesus showed how little he feared the wrath of the civil powers. Again on a Sabbath he healed a man with the dropsy, and again objection was taken. This time Jesus spoke a parable in which the real meaning of their actions was set forth, as a rejection of the great invitation of God. The popularity of Jesus with the people at large was still very great, and crowds followed him wherever he went. Seeing that their following was largely through curiosity, he warned them that his service was not easy and counselled them to think the matter through before they decided to go with him. His service called for a definite and complete abandonment of all that was not wholly consistent with his will. The people still went with him. Many of them were of the most despised classes, and the welcome given to such by Jesus proved the next point of attack by his enemies. We cannot admire the persistence of their hatred of him who had come to give them life and happiness, but we cannot be wholly sorry for the occasion that led Jesus to speak that wonderful threefold parable of the lost son, the lost sheep and the lost coin. In these stories Jesus gave us a

picture of the love of God for his lost world such as we have perhaps in no other part of the Book except the record of his own death. It is a story which has led many, many sinners to Christ, and has been described as the finest short story in the literature of the world. The Master went on to speak of the need of care and wisdom in determining the actions and plans of life, pointing out that a life spent for money and without taking God into account was a dismal failure.

While still in Perea, word was brought to Jesus that Lazarus was sick. The expression used by the sisters as they sent word was very tender and illustrates the close fellowship that existed between him and his three friends. When Jesus heard the news he made at first no effort to return, but after two days he went with his disciples to Bethany. Thomas, who has come in for a lot of blame for his lack of faith concerning the Lord's resurrection, showed here that he was fully devoted to his Lord, for it was he who, knowing the danger that existed for them all in Judea, suggested to the others when it became evident that Jesus was going there that they, too, should go with him and share the death which he believed would come to him there. Arrived at Bethany, they found that Lazarus had been dead four days. Martha and Mary both poured out their grief and their belief in Jesus in their greeting to him. The raising of the dead man caused belief in Jesus in the hearts of many who saw it done. The incident finally brought to a head the hatred of the Jews, and the chief priests now sought diligently for occasion to put him to death. The time was not yet ripe for Jesus to leave this earth, and he avoided the immediate danger by retiring from the vicinity of Jerusalem.

V. An Interlude of Teaching

(Matthew 19: 1—20: 34; Mark 10: 1-52; Luke 17: 11—19: 28)

Apparently at this point we are to place the journey through Perea recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke. Jesus took advantage of certain incidents to give further teaching to his disciples.

The Pharisees asked concerning the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven, and Jesus, answering their question,

spoke of the suddenness and unexpectedness of the coming of the Son of Man.

He spoke a couple of parables also at this time which are recorded by Luke alone. These were the story of the importunate widow and her request for vengeance against her enemy, with its accompanying exhortation to his people to pray and not to faint, and the story of the Pharisee and the publican, in which he showed that, in the sight of God, the worthy attitude was that of repentance and humility rather than of pride.

Passing now to Perea, he started on his last journey to Jerusalem. On the way the Pharisees tempted him regarding the teaching on divorce, and Jesus stated again that the marriage relation is sacred and holy and not to be broken for all sorts of reasons.

On the way little children were brought to him for his blessing. With a strange misunderstanding of his heart, the disciples were sending them away when Jesus stopped them with a rebuke and the statement that of such was the Kingdom of Heaven. In such wise did Jesus set forth the eternal truth that the childlike spirit is that which finds favor with God, and not the spirit of boast and pride.

The next incident noted occurred when he was stopped on the road by a rich young ruler who came seeking the secret of eternal life. As always when he was faced by such an inquiry, Jesus answered it frankly and fully. First turning the young man's attention to the Jewish law, which he well knew, Jesus elicited from him the statement that he had kept all the mentioned requirements from his youth up. This does not seem to have been an idle claim, for the record says that Jesus, looking on him, loved him. It was necessary for the young man to go further than he had done before he found what he wanted. In his riches lay his danger, and he must for Jesus' sake be willing to lay even them aside and follow his Lord. Faced with this alternative, he found the sacrifice too great, and turned sorrowfully away. Jesus used the incident to stress again the tendency of wealth to blind the heart and shut one from glory. Is it not strange, when from the words of Jesus and our own experience as well we know that wealth draws the heart to mortal things and makes it harder to follow closely in the steps

of our Master, we still lay so much emphasis upon it and still find in us so little of the spirit of sacrifice and service that marked the Master's life? Jesus did not, of course, mean that no rich man could enter heaven, but simply that it was very hard for such a one to do so, and the reason was that it is so hard to get the mastery of riches. Anything that we set before our love and allegiance to him would come under the same condemnation. It was characteristic of Peter that the words of the Master should bring to his mind the remembrance of that day when with his friends he left the nets and fishes and followed Jesus. The answer of Jesus set forth the wisdom even from the point of view of this life of such a choice as they had made, and infinitely more so from the point of view of eternity.

Growing out of the answer came a parable. Jesus told of the employer who went at different times in the day to secure help for his fields. The climax of the story came when the employer defended his action in giving equal remuneration to those who had worked all day and those who had worked only one hour. In the parable Jesus seems to have been teaching that it is better to leave the matter of reward with God than to be seeking to bargain with him for work that we do.

The time was drawing very near when he should be crucified, and the consciousness of what lay ahead of him rested very heavily on his heart. Taking the disciples apart, he sought to show them something of what awaited him in Jerusalem. They could not grasp it. It did not seem possible, when all around they could see the people crowding to see and hear and follow their Master, that such a thing as he said could take place. It does not appear that they made any answer to his words, but they certainly did not grasp what he was saying, and, indeed, just at this time the mother of James and John with her sons came asking for them the principal places in the kingdom which she evidently expected he would soon set up in Palestine. There was infinite pathos in the answer of Jesus, as he pointed out that she did not understand what she asked. His question whether they would share in his own coming experiences was lightly answered in the affirmative, and with sadness Jesus replied that they

would indeed do so, but that the giving of the thing they asked was not in his hands, but in the hands of his Father.

Crossing the Jordan River near the head of the Dead Sea, Jesus, with his disciples, now came to the city of Jericho. Here they were met by two blind men whose sight was restored to them by the Lord. In the city a great crowd, drawn together by the news that the famous teacher and healer was in their midst, thronged the streets trying to get a glimpse of him. Among the men of the city was one of the tax-gatherers, named Zaccheus. This man had evidently been touched by what he had heard of Jesus, and, being unable on account of his small stature to see him above the heads of the crowd, he secured a point of vantage in the branches of a tree that overhung the road along which Jesus would have to pass. When the Master reached the spot, he called to Zaccheus and invited himself to his house for the day. The joy of Zaccheus was evident from his immediate response and his words of renunciation of his gains for the Master's sake. What a contrast to the action of the rich young ruler! But the blessing of salvation came to his house that day because he had gladly followed Jesus.

The mistake of the disciples concerning the immediate setting up by Jesus of an earthly kingdom was paralleled by the belief in the minds of the crowds that the Kingdom of Heaven was soon to appear. To correct that error, he spoke the parable of the nobleman who went to a far country and left money with his servants that they might trade with it and get increase for him during his absence. The point of the story was clear, that he would have men now seeking rather to faithfully do his service than to be asking always concerning the immediacy of his return. That does not mean that the matter of his return is not an important one for the Christian to consider, but simply that the best way for us to prepare for that great event whenever it comes is to have been doing during his absence, to the best of our ability, the tasks he has given us to do. This is a lesson that all of us need to learn today. The doctrine of our Lord's glorious return is one of the most gracious beliefs of Christian people, but our more important practical lesson is that in the expectation of that return and in our own preparation for it the essential thing is that we shall be making the most of the

opportunities that fall to our lot while we are still here and he is yet tarrying.

VI. Reaching Jerusalem for the Final Struggle

(Matthew 21: 1-17; Mark 11: 1-11; Luke 19: 29-44; John 11: 55—12: 19)

From Jericho the band of men and women went on to Bethany, a little village near Jerusalem, where dwelt the sisters and Lazarus. Here again he was besieged by people who sought to see him, but here also the hatred of the religious leaders was fast coming to a head. Now they sought to kill not Jesus only but also Lazarus, because the constant spectacle of him who had been dead walking before them was causing many to believe on Jesus.

Finally, with a great crowd, he came to Jerusalem itself, not to stay, but, as it were, to touch it and bring to a full flame the passions of hatred that were burning in the hearts of his enemies. When news of his approach reached the city, another great crowd went out to meet him. When they saw him he was riding on a colt, as the prophet Zechariah had predicted the Messiah would ride into Jerusalem. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds, and with shouts of praise and the waving of palm branches the people acclaimed the coming King. All this was bitter to the Pharisees and they sought his rebuke, both of the disciples and their enthusiasm, and of the praises of the children. How his great heart yearned over the city. He knew that the acclaim of that day was not a permanent praise, but only a fleeting emotion, and that in a few days more the same voices would be demanding his death, and his voice broke and the tears flowed as he thought of the coming days of rejection and the consequent days of bitter suffering that were to come to city and people.

So the day came to an end with the city in an uproar of delight and joy, with the Pharisees and their allies firmly set in their purpose to destroy him, and with Jesus and his disciples leaving the city for the quiet home in Bethany, where he would make his headquarters for the few remaining days of his active ministry in the flesh.

TEACHING OUTLINE

The confession of Peter and the transfiguration marked a high point in Jesus' life. From this point he went forward to Calvary.

I. PRIVATE INSTRUCTION OF THE TWELVE.

Necessary now that they were committed fully to his cause.

Covered a number of points on which they were to hold and proclaim his teachings.

II. JESUS PUBLICLY ACCEPTS THE ISSUE.

Before this Jesus has largely avoided an open clash with his enemies.

Now he proclaimed at Jerusalem his Deity, and publicly accepted the issue involved.

III. AN INTERLUDE OF QUIET.

At Bethany, where he rested a while in the home of Martha and Mary.

IV. A PERIOD OF CONFLICT.

A series of miracles and conversations showing the implacable hatred of the Jewish leaders, and resulting in definite purpose on their part to kill him.

V. AN INTERLUDE OF TEACHING.

This occupied the journey from Galilee, through Perea, to Jerusalem.

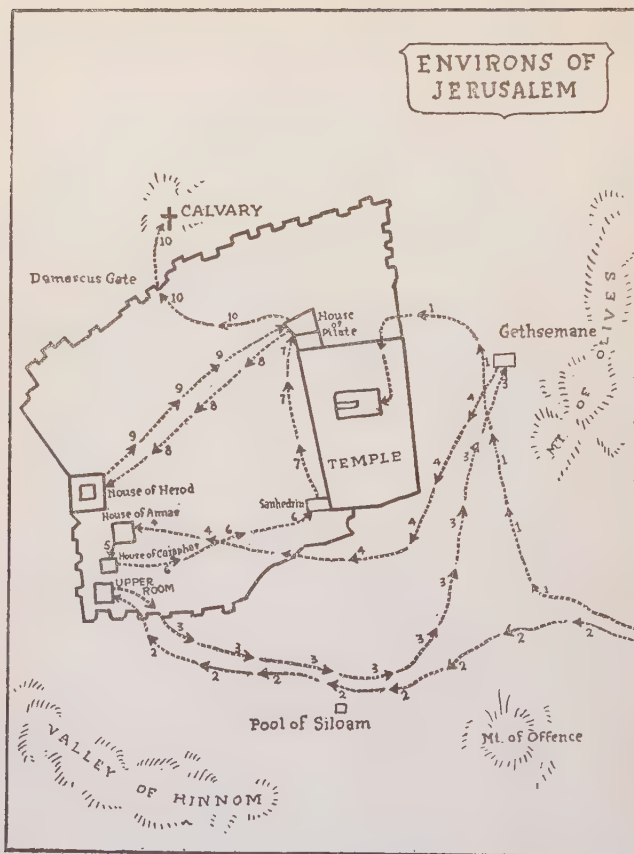
The teaching was given to the disciples in conversations, and grew largely out of incidents arising by the way.

It concluded with the subject of his second coming.

VI. REACHING JERUSALEM FOR THE FINAL STRUGGLE.

The Triumphal Entry.

Spontaneous but temporary enthusiasm of the people.



THE LAST WEEK

1, from Bethany to Jerusalem, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday;
 2, to upper room, "memorial supper"; 3, to Gethsemane; 4, to the
 house of Annas; 5, to the house of Caiphas; 6, to meeting place
 of the Sanhedrin; 7, to the house of Pilate; 8, 9, to the house of
 Herod and return; 10, to Calvary.

VI

THE LAST WEEK

The incidents of the last week of our Lord's earthly life are given in the gospels in such manner that we can follow them day by day.

Monday

(Matthew 21: 18, 19; Mark 11: 12-18; Luke 19: 45-48; John 12: 20-50.)

The Monday morning saw Jesus returning to the city from the home at Bethany. On the way the fig tree was cursed because in the moment of the Master's need it was not ready to supply that need, or perhaps because its flourishing appearance was only a false pretense of fruit.

Reaching the city itself, Jesus found a similar condition in the temple to that which had on an earlier occasion led to his driving out the sellers and buyers. That act was now repeated, to the astonishment of the multitude and the still greater hatred of the chief priests.

During that day also came the Greeks with their request that they might see Jesus, a request that brought joy to the heart of Jesus as he saw in it the promise of that time when all men would feel the magnetic power of his cross.

The day was not full of incident, these things being all that are recorded.

Tuesday

(Matthew 21: 19—26: 16; Mark 11: 19—14:11; Luke 20: 1—22: 6; John 12: 2-8.)

This was in some ways the busiest day of all the week.

The walk into the city in the morning was featured by the astonishment of the disciples at finding dead the fig tree which he had cursed the previous morning. In his answer to the astonishment Jesus gave still another lesson in the mighty power of faith.

When they reached the city, Jesus began as was his wont to teach the people. Now came to him his enemies demanding by what authority he was carrying on his work. Jesus replied by asking a counter question regarding the origin of the work of John. This put his enemies in a dilemma. After considering it they found that any straight answer would be embarrassing, so they replied that they did not know. It was not a true statement even of their own opinion, but simply represented what to them appeared the easiest way out of a difficult position. Jesus replied by saying that neither would he answer their question.

This answer was now followed by three parables: the two sons and their response to their father's request, the wicked husbandmen, and the king's marriage feast. In all these he was setting forth the truth that the nation of the Jews was being finally rejected because of their unfaithfulness to their God-given mission in the world.

Such a teaching could not be permitted by the Pharisees and their friends to pass without protest, and they now sought to catch him by hard questions that they in turn might have something to bring against him. With this in mind came first Pharisees and Herodians asking the question as to giving tribute to Cæsar. When this question was skilfully answered, the Sadducees tried their hand with a question concerning the resurrection. Being in their turn answered, there came finally a lawyer asking the question as to the great commandment in the law. This also was so answered as to leave no loophole for them to find fault, and then Jesus asked them a question as to whose son the Christ would be. When they answered, he gave them a second question that left them helpless.

Jesus now turned to the crowds and in scathing words denounced the spirit of hypocrisy that marked the words and acts and lives of the scribes and Pharisees. Then, addressing them directly, he poured out the vials of his denunciation upon scribe and Pharisee alike.

Jesus now sat down close to the treasury of the temple and noticed how the people gave of their means to the support of that temple. The rich placed in much, but at last came a poor widow who cast in a very small sum, but a sum representing all her living. Seeing this, Jesus spoke of it and magnified the small gift of her whose all

it was over the great gifts of those who gave of their abundance.

Evening was now apparently approaching, and Jesus started with his disciples to leave the city. Passing out of the temple, his attention was called to the greatness of that building. In reply he foretold the approaching time when all those great stones would lie in ruin. The disciples in amazement asked when these events would take place. In his answer, Jesus seems to have spoken of two distinct events, one the fall of Jerusalem and the other his own return. It is difficult to determine at every point to which event he was referring, but in his discourse he set forth again the need of being on our guard against false teachings and false Christs. Some signs of his return he did give, and urged his people to be so watchful and faithful that whenever he returned they should be ready for his coming.

The discourse was closed by two parables and a picture. In the first of the parables Jesus told of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise and five foolish, as they awaited the coming of the bridegroom, and commanded his disciples also to watch. In the second he gave the story of the man who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and before leaving gave to his servants talents according to their respective abilities. His return after receiving the kingdom, and his treatment of the servants as they came reporting their use of the talents entrusted to them, were used to exhort the disciples to be faithful in the performance of their tasks while he should be away from them. The teaching of both of the parables applies with equal force to his people of all times. We need to be both watchful for his return, and faithful in the discharge of the tasks entrusted to us during the time that he is awaiting the fulfilment of the Father's pleasure, so that whenever he shall return we shall be ready to meet him with joy and shall with gladness hear his words of welcome and approval. The picture showed the judgment and separation of the nations.

Late that same evening the enemies of Jesus gathered in the city and sought how they might without an uproar take Jesus and accomplish their purpose of putting him to death. They were afraid that if he were taken during the feast, and publicly, it would cause a riot among the

people, who saw in him a great teacher and prophet. Time and the treachery of Judas were to combine very shortly in placing him in their hands.

Leaving the city, as was his wont during that last week, he took his evening meal in the home of Simon the leper at Bethany. Here as he sat at meat occurred an incident which was to fan into flame the cupidity of Judas. We have already seen that there was a very close and intimate friendship between the two sisters and Lazarus on the one hand and Jesus on the other. Of the two sisters Mary seems to have seen furthest into the character and work of Jesus. Now, moved by some impulse, some premonition that he was not to be much longer with them, Mary brought a precious possession of her own, a box of ointment, and, breaking it, poured its contents over the head of Jesus as he reclined at the table. We must not confuse this incident with the similar one where the sinful woman anointed his feet. Mary's action raised a storm of protest from the disciples, headed by Judas. They could not see the reason for it, and when they took into consideration the costliness of the ointment, they felt that they just witnessed a clear case of wastefulness. How little they understood the action of Mary! But Jesus understood it and knew, too, what significance attached to it in the light of his own near death, and he upheld the action and praised her for it. It is not certain that we are to read into Mary's action a clear knowledge of Jesus' approaching crucifixion. Probably without knowing all that it meant, her heart had rightly prompted her action.

This last incident, with the rebuke given by Jesus to that spirit in his disciples which counted the value of the ointment and could not see its deep significance, finally decided the course of Judas. It is evident that for some time he had been placing too much value on the moneys of the little band. In fact, we are told in this incident that he was a thief and took for himself what was placed in his hands for the general expenses of the whole company. Now the attitude of Jesus toward the incident and his rebuke of the disciples for their objections, led Judas to seek the enemies of Jesus and offer for a sufficient consideration to deliver him up to them. It is of interest as showing their attitude and his own, that the amount agreed upon was a very small one. From that time he sought

with his intimate knowledge of the movements of Jesus to accomplish his purpose and deliver Jesus to his enemies.

Wednesday

This day, according to the generally accepted events of the week, seems to have been passed in quiet retirement at Bethany. It was not without significance, as on his part Jesus rested for the final struggle which he foreknew, and on the part of his enemies it was used to perfect their plans for his overthrow as far as they could accomplish it.

Thursday

(Matthew 26: 17-46; Mark 14: 12-42; Luke 22: 7-46; John 13: 1—18: 1)

In the evening of this day Jesus went again to Jerusalem, now for the last time. We can enter faintly into the feelings with which he approached the city. From previous incidents we know that his great heart had yearned over the city and that its rejection of him had pained him deeply. Now he goes to meet the doom which awaits him there. The time of the Passover Feast had come, and Jesus sent two of the disciples ahead to prepare for that feast for the band. This they did, finding, as Jesus had said, the man who was willing to allow them the use of the public guest chamber of his house for that purpose. As they sat at the supper several incidents occurred. His first words indicated the deep longing that he had had that he should be able to eat this Passover also with them. It is a matter of surprise to us yet that the disciples could not feel the approach of those incidents which weighed so deeply upon the heart of their Lord. But they could not, and they began again the discussion which Jesus had stopped at an earlier point in his ministry. They still believed that the kingdom was an earthly one; they did not know that one single day later they would all be scattered without a head to their band, and they contended again over the question, which of them was the greatest. How small and foolish such a discussion looks to us when we remember what tragic events were looming on the near horizon. But we do the same sort of thing ourselves too often. Jesus again rebuked their spirit and pointed out that the law of greatness in his Kingdom is the law of service.

Before they began the feast, Jesus took the towel and girded himself, and then performed the servant's task of washing their feet. The incident has been misunderstood and has consequently been elevated into a church ordinance by some. But to look at it in this way is to miss altogether its spirit and teaching. The discussion as to respective greatness had just taken place, and it is obvious that what Jesus was doing was setting an example of the type of service and spirit which he had just been commending to them. In this light his words of exhortation that they should do as he had done to them take on new significance and meaning. Peter's character shows up in his attitude toward the purpose of his Lord.

Now the feast began, and as they ate together Jesus made known the fact that one of them should betray him. In surprise they began to ask, "Is it I?" Jesus told them that it would be the one to whom he would give the bread when he had dipped it into the dish. He gave it to Judas, and Broadus places here the question of Judas as he asked in his turn, "Is it I?" It gives us a glimpse into the depths of his treachery that when he had already agreed with the chief priests on the amount he was to receive for his action, he could now seek to avoid the issue by asking in all apparent innocence such a question. But when he had received the sop he went immediately out and sought to put his plan into execution.

When he had left the company, Jesus began to speak to them of his death and to urge them to love one another. Such an exhortation coming upon the heels of their contention as to greatness was certainly needed. Turning to Peter, he warned him against the wiles of Satan, and when that disciple indignantly asserted that of all the band he would be the last to go back upon his Lord, Jesus told him that that very night he would thrice deny him.

The Passover Feast of the Jews looked back to their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, but it had a deeper meaning than that, as it looked forward to the time when the Lamb of God would be slain to deliver men from a worse bondage than that of Egypt. So it was fitting that when the Passover had been observed by Jesus and his disciples he should proceed to institute that memorial which looks back to the crucifixion as the Passover looked forward to it. That atonement was to take place

the very next day. Now that Judas had left the room, as most students agree, Jesus took the bread and the wine and, after returning thanks, gave to the disciples with the command that such an action should be a perpetual memorial among his people. The Passover has lost its meaning as it has been fulfilled, but the Lord's Supper will keep its meaning and significance until that day when we shall hear the voice of the archangel and see our Lord coming in the glory of the Father and the holy angels.

With a keen appreciation of what the next few days were to mean to the disciples, Jesus now sought to prepare their hearts for his death. He counselled that they should trust God, and spoke of the need of demonstrating their love for him by their obedience to his commands. He promised them the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who should be their Companion, Leader and Teacher, and spoke of the joy and peace which those would have who were his. As they talked together, they seem to have arisen from the table and to have gone out to the Garden of Gethsemane, without interrupting the conversation. We cannot go in detail into this last discourse of our Lord. Sufficient to call attention to the fact that it contains his last words of instruction and comfort to them as he was about to leave them and go back to the Father.

When they reached the garden, he left them and went ahead by himself to face his approaching death. We have been given a glimpse into the anguish of his heart in that hour as he prayed, with the sweat, like great drops of blood, falling to the ground. What caused the bitterness of his agony? Some say the fear that he would die without having accomplished the purpose of his coming, the crucifixion. Others, with more reason, have ascribed it to the facing of the shame and scoffing and pain of the approaching trials and crucifixion. We must never forget that Jesus was fully human, and human with a sensitiveness of spirit unknown, perhaps, to any other. How could he look unmoved on the agonies of the day ahead of him! Small wonder that his human nature shrank from the bitterness of the ordeal. But not for long. Immediately his faith overcame and he willingly gave himself into the hands of his Father. How is it possible to look at this scene in Gethsemane without realizing that sin is an awful thing, and that in very truth

nothing can atone for it but the sacrifice of the Son of God himself. Strengthened by his prayers, Jesus finally came to the slumbering disciples and, waking them, went forth to meet the end.

TEACHING OUTLINE

The material in this chapter is taken by days.

MONDAY

Cursing the fig tree and cleansing the temple.

TUESDAY

Challenged as to his authority, he replied with the question of the origin of John's ministry, following that with three parables of rejection.

Three attempts to entrap him by hard questions were foiled, and were followed by stern denunciation of the Pharisees and scribes.

The day ended with a long discussion in answer to the disciples' question as to the destruction of Jerusalem and his own return.

He spent the evening and night at Bethany.

On this evening his enemies met to plot his death.

WEDNESDAY

Spent in retirement and rest.

THURSDAY

The last day of physical freedom.

Went to Jerusalem in the evening and ate the Passover Feast with his disciples. At this time the Memorial Supper was instituted, and the lesson of service given in the washing of the disciples' feet. He conversed long with them, and sought to comfort and strengthen their hearts against his approaching death. From the upper room they all passed to Gethsemane, where he faced the final struggle and drank of the bitter cup. Thence he went forth to meet the end.

VII

FROM GETHSEMANE TO OLIVET

Scripture Passages—Matthew 26: 47—28: 20; Mark 14: 43—16: 20; Luke 22: 47—24: 53; John 18: 2—21: 25.

THE BETRAYAL

Judas, who, earlier in the evening, had left the upper room in order to betray Jesus to his enemies, came with them to the garden, and there with the traitor's kiss pointed him out to them. The attempted defence by Peter was stopped by Jesus, who knew that the hour of his death had come. He, therefore, permitted himself to be taken captive by the officers and went willingly with them as a prisoner. By them he was taken to the authorities for trial.

THE TWO TRIALS

The trial of Jesus was in two separate parts, each of which had three stages. In the first part Jesus was tried before the Jewish Sanhedrin, the high court of the Jews. At the time Caiaphas was the high priest and as such presided over the Sanhedrin.

1. THE JEWISH TRIAL

The first stage in this trial before the Sanhedrin came when Jesus was led before Annas, who was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest. On this occasion Jesus was asked about his disciples and his teaching, and in reply asserted that all of his teaching and actions had been done openly, so that the Jews were fully able to testify concerning them. His answer was treated as an insult to Annas, one of the officers striking and reprimanding him. It was evident, therefore, at the outset of the trial that no justice was to be expected.

The second stage in this trial took place in the house of Caiaphas. Contrary to all sense of justice, the Sanhedrin sought to find cause against Jesus whereby he might

be sent to death, the court, therefore, becoming the accusers. In spite of their efforts, however, there could not be found two concurring testimonies, until, at last, two witnesses came who quoted the words he had used when, in answer to their challenge concerning himself, he said that if they would destroy the temple he would build it again in three days. This statement by Jesus could in no just way have been used as a basis for his condemnation, but even in that the witness of the two men did not wholly agree. Seeing this, the high priest himself challenged Jesus in the effort to get some incriminating word from his own lips. For a time Jesus remained silent, but at length acknowledged that he was the Christ, the Son of the Blessed, and spoke of the day when he should return in power. On this the high priest proclaimed him guilty of blasphemy and condemned him as worthy of death. Then the bitter hatred of the Sanhedrin broke out, and with spitting and buffeting they mocked him.

The third stage in the Jewish trial came about day-break, when before the Sanhedrin Jesus was plainly asked if he was the Christ. Once more he asserted that he was, and the whole company now carried him to the Roman governor.

The formality of this third trial was necessary in order to make the action legal, it being required by the law that trials should take place in the day. At this time, as we have already seen, the Roman authority held the power in Palestine. They had retained for themselves the power of life and death. The hatred of the Jews, therefore, was not able to express itself in the death of Jesus unless they could secure the consent of the Roman authority. Hence the second phase of the trial and the action of the Sanhedrin in carrying Jesus before Pilate, the Roman governor.

2. THE CIVIL TRIAL

In the early morning Jesus was led before Pilate. Though his accusers, with a strange perversity of conscience, would not themselves enter what was to them unhallowed ground, since to do so would make them ceremonially unfit for the observance of the Passover Feast, they were perfectly willing to observe this feast with the blood on their hands of One whom they knew to be innocent. In their action was summed up in a most graphic

way the empty formalism of the Jewish religion during the days of Jesus.

The civil trial had also three stages. In the first of them Jesus was tried before Pilate. The governor seems, at first, not to have wanted any part in the matter at all, but the Jews insisted that Jesus was worthy of death and that it was necessary for him to act in order that his death might be brought about. On this Pilate, entering into the palace, asked Jesus whether he was the King of the Jews, and a conversation ensued in which Jesus asserted his Kingship, but that his Kingdom was not of this world. Pilate was so impressed by the conversation that he went and proclaimed to the Jews that he could find no fault in him. The chief priests, however, vehemently accused Jesus, though, to Pilate's great astonishment, he gave no answer. The tumult of the accusers increased until Pilate, finding mention made of Galilee and that Jesus was a Galilean, dismissed him and sent him to Herod.

The second stage in the trial found Jesus before Herod. Herod Antipas was one of the sons of Herod the Great and had control over the territory of Galilee and Perea. Technically, therefore, Jesus came under his jurisdiction. When tried before Herod, however, Jesus would make no answer to any accusations; none to the mockery and insults of Herod and his soldiers. He was, therefore, sent back to Pilate. Incidentally, his trial before Herod healed a breach that had existed for some time between that king and Pilate.

The third stage in the trial found Jesus again before Pilate, who now sought in various ways to release him. He proclaimed to the Jews that he had found no fault in him, nor yet had Herod, and he suggested that Jesus should be released, according to the custom by which one prisoner was released each year at the Feast of the Passover. He gave them their choice between Jesus and Barabbas, evidently choosing a violent criminal with the hope that the contrast between him and Jesus would lead them to ask for the release of Jesus, and so relieve him from a situation which was rapidly becoming embarrassing to him.

Just at that time, also, Pilate received a message from his wife, counselling him not to have any unjust dealings

with the prisoner because of a dream which had come to her.

Contrary to what was evidently the hope of the governor, the rabble, stirred up by the chief priests and elders, asked for the release of Barabbas and the death of Jesus. Yielding somewhat to the clamor of the mob, Pilate now had Jesus scourged, the soldiers also in mockery arraying him in the garments of royalty and making merry over him. Pilate still sought to release Jesus, but in vain, and finally under the pressure from the crowd he yielded and gave Jesus over to his crucifixion.

Pilate's previous record had been a dark one, and he evidently found his hand forced in this matter, fearing that the Jews, if he did not yield, would bring such accusations to Cæsar as would result in his being removed from his office.

The soldiers led Jesus away, and for some time now made sport of him. Finally, when they had tired of this, they led him out to Golgotha.

OTHER EVENTS DURING THE TRIAL

1. THE DENIALS OF PETER

During the course of the trial before the Jewish court there occurred the threefold denial of Jesus by Peter. At the arrest of Jesus in the garden the disciples all fled, though John seems soon to have returned and taken his stand by his Master. Peter followed afar off and mingled with the crowds around the gate of the high priest's residence, evidently hoping to escape in this way any identification with Jesus and his disciples. When this became impossible, owing to his being recognized by those who stood there, he thrice denied the Savior, thus fulfilling the sad prediction of Jesus the night before. Just after the third denial, the cock crew, and at the same moment the Lord turned and looked on Peter. The crowing of the cock and the look from his Lord brought the memory of the conversation the night before flooding back over Peter, who immediately with bitter penitence went away and wept bitterly. It was a sad incident in his life, and yet a salutary lesson as to his own weakness and the folly of his boasting.

2. THE DEATH OF JUDAS

The arrest of Jesus awoke in the mind of Judas a realization of the enormity of his conduct. Going back to the chief priests and elders he sought to undo his act, and on their refusal to accede to his request he threw down the money in their midst and, departing, hanged himself. He seems to have hoped that Jesus being betrayed would deliver himself, as he knew that he had the power to do, or he may have been led on by the deceitfulness of the money element involved and been blind to the real nature of his conduct until it was too late to change it. His suicide indicated that he was not so much penitent concerning his evil deed as remorseful over its outcome.

THE CRUCIFIXION

From the last trial before Pilate, Jesus was led out to a place called Golgotha, just outside the walls of the city. Simon of Cyrene was impressed to carry the cross, which the exhausted frame of Jesus had not strength, after the wearying experiences of the night, to do. Arriving at Calvary, Jesus was crucified between the two thieves. When offered the drink of myrrh mingled with wine, the purpose of which was evidently to somewhat deaden the agony of the crucifixion, he refused to receive it. Over the cross of Jesus Pilate erected a title: "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." This title was written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek in order that all who passed by might be able to read it. When asked by the chief priests to change the title so as to read that Jesus said he was the King of the Jews, Pilate's patience seems to have been exhausted and he curtly refused.

While hanging on the cross Jesus spoke seven times. His first word was a prayer for forgiveness for his enemies; his second, the committal of his mother to the care of John, the beloved disciple; his third, the promise to the penitent thief that that day he should be with him in Paradise. At midday there came darkness over the whole land which continued for three hours. After the darkness had passed away Jesus cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" A moment or two later, knowing that all things were finished, he said, "I thirst." Receiving the vinegar which was brought, he said, "It is

finished," and then, commending his spirit unto his Father's hand, he bowed his head and died.

Immediately following his death there occurred a great earthquake and the resurrection of many of the saints. The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. The centurion who had charge of the crucifixion was deeply impressed by these events, as were also the women and the multitudes who saw them.

It being the day before the Sabbath, the Jews came asking that the legs of the crucified men might be broken in order to hasten their death, but it was found when they came to Jesus that he was already dead, so his legs were not broken, although in order to make assurance of his death doubly sure one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, thus fulfilling the Scripture.

THE BURIAL IN JOSEPH'S TOMB

As evening came on, Joseph of Arimathea, who up to this time had been a secret disciple, came asking that he might be permitted to give proper burial to the body, and this permission being granted, he and Nicodemus took the body of Jesus away and gave it loving and tender burial in the tomb of Joseph. The women followed them as they did so and, seeing where the tomb was, returned to prepare spices and ointment for the proper embalming of the body. Meantime the chief priests and Pharisees came to Pilate and, recalling the prediction of Jesus that after three days he would rise again, secured a guard to assure that the disciples would not come to steal the body and, carrying it away, thus give credence to his prediction.

So came to a close the earthly life of our Savior, and in view of the high hopes of national glory held by even his own disciples in connection with his mission, it is small wonder that to them his death seemed the end of all their hopes.

THE RESURRECTION AND THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS DURING THE FORTY DAYS

The day of the Sabbath passed by without incident and on the morning of the first day of the week the women proceeded to the supulchre for the purpose of completing the work of embalming his body. Reaching it, they were amazed to find that the stone had been rolled away from it, and still more amazed when they were informed by the

angel visitor that Jesus had risen. Mary ran back to the city and told Peter and John, and they in turn ran to the sepulchre and found it empty even as they had been informed.

The disciples returned to Jerusalem but Mary stayed outside the sepulchre weeping. Then it was that Jesus, appearing to her, revealed himself unto her as he did a little later to the other women. On the same day, as evening drew near, he conversed with two of the disciples as they journeyed toward Emmaus and was known by them when, at their invitation, he sat down to the evening meal with them. With hearts stirred to the depths by their recognition of their Lord, they hastily returned to Jerusalem and told their story to the eleven. Luke tells us that while their story and an appearance to Peter were being discussed by them Jesus himself appeared in the midst and, quieting their fears, demonstrated himself to be indeed the risen Lord by eating a piece of broiled fish. A week later, again on the first day of the week at evening, he appeared unto them once more and this time took pains to convince Thomas of the reality of his resurrection.

John records another appearance at the Sea of Galilee, where occurred the miraculous catch of fishes and the threefold question and instruction to Peter. Two other appearances are recorded: one on the mountain in Galilee, where Jesus gave to them the great missionary commission, which must always constitute the marching orders of the Christian; and the other on the Mount of Olives, when, after instructing them to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, he repeated in somewhat different words the missionary commission and then, having blessed them, was carried up into heaven, there to remain at the right hand of the Father until, according to his own promise and the explicit declaration of the angels to the disciples who were gazing after him, he shall once more come to the earth, this second time in the glory and power of his Father and of the holy angels.

It is with feelings of impotence and humility that one studies and seeks to set forth the earthly life and ministry of our divine Lord and Savior. His life was full of the revelation of the Father in presentation of the truth and in the ministry of his daily life, as well as in

his own spotless life and sacrificial death. The supreme task of the Christian today, a task to which our love and gratitude to our Lord should lead us to greater consecration, is to carry the message of the incarnate, crucified and risen Lord to the ends of the earth. The one necessary thing for us, if we are in any measure to fill God's place for us, is to carry out the instructions of the Great Commission.

TEACHING OUTLINE

The chapter covers the period from the Betrayal to the Ascension.

I. THE BETRAYAL BY JUDAS WITH THE TRAITOR'S KISS

II. THE TWO TRIALS

The Jewish Trial in three stages.

Before Annas.

In the House of Caiaphas.

Daylight Trial.

The Roman Trial in Three Stages.

Before Pilate.

Before Herod.

Before Pilate a second time.

III. OTHER EVENTS OF THE TRIAL

The Denials of Peter.

The Death of Judas.

IV. THE CRUCIFIXION—WITH THE SEVEN SAYINGS OF JESUS AND THE EARTHQUAKE AND DARKNESS.

V. THE BURIAL IN JOSEPH'S TOMB.

VI. THE RESURRECTION AND THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS DURING THE FORTY DAYS.

VIII

THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM

A.D. 30-34

(Acts 1—7)

We have seen that the crucifixion of Jesus had led to a condition of discouragement on the part of the disciples which had only been corrected by most undoubted proofs of the resurrection. In the words of Jesus to them after his resurrection he had told them, among other things, to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father in the coming of the Holy Spirit. This command they now sought to obey, and gathered together in the upper room waiting in fellowship and prayer for the fulfilment of that promise. Luke in the Book of Acts mentions one hundred and twenty as forming that waiting company. While they waited, it seems to have occurred to Peter that the time was ripe for the selection of a disciple who should take the place in the apostolic band made vacant by the suicide of Judas. Whether he was here presuming too far has been a much-discussed question. We know his impulsive nature, and it would not be at all impossible that he here overstepped the line and did that which he should not have done. At any rate his suggestion seemed good to the rest of the band and they proceeded to carry it out, seeking the direction of God on their choice. The lot fell upon Matthias, who was from that day on numbered among the twelve, though we see nothing of him in the further history of the disciples.

PENTECOST

Some ten days elapsed from the time that Jesus ascended, and then one day as they were waiting in prayer and fellowship they were startled by the sound as of a rushing wind, which filled all the room where they were sitting. This sound was accompanied by an appearance

as of tongues of fire parting asunder and descending upon all of them. In such guise did God accompany the gift of the Holy Spirit to those early disciples. We must not be led astray here. Many teach that to-day as then there is to come to the Christian a special baptism of the Holy Spirit which will complete the work of conversion, and that this baptism will be accompanied by signs. It must be remembered that Jesus had distinctly told his disciples that the coming of the Holy Spirit would be impossible unless he himself left them. Now he had done so, and the coming of the Comforter was the fulfilment of his promise. From that time till now the Holy Spirit has been the active power in God's Kingdom work here, and the teaching of the New Testament is that every true believer has both been born again into the family and Kingdom of God and has received the Holy Spirit. At the same time we need to realize that most of us do not allow the Spirit to work in and through us as he wishes, and that we might have a much fuller measure and manifestation of his presence and power if we were more willing for him to use us as he wills.

In this first manifestation of his presence there came to the disciples the gift of speech in new tongues. It was a miraculous gift, which enabled them to take advantage of the assembled multitudes of Jews to preach the new faith widely.

The crucifixion of Jesus had taken place at the time of the observance of the Passover, one of the yearly feasts which all adult Jews were expected by their law to attend. The coming of the Holy Spirit took place at Pentecost, another such feast. Both incidents, therefore, were timed to allow the widest publicity to be given to them. The news of what had occurred in the upper room was not long in spreading about over the city, and men and women gathered together in large numbers to see and wonder over this new thing. Greatly must they have wondered at the events which were taking place in connection with the new religion started by Jesus. At the crucifixion things had happened which sent them back to the city marvelling. Now other events are occurring which made them equally marvel. Small wonder that they ran together to see and hear this new thing. If the enemies of Jesus had tried to hush up the new teaching they had

signally failed. Indeed, all through, both in their dealings with the Lord himself and in those with his disciples, the efforts of the enemies of the cross were pitiable failures when they sought to keep matters quiet.

What seems to have most struck their notice was the fact of the speaking of these men in tongues so that all could understand. They knew them to be Jews of Palestine, unversed in the languages of the distant Roman provinces, and yet they were hearing in their own dialects the wonders of the cross. In amazement they asked each other of the strange happening. But others mocking, as they had done all along at the work of Jesus and his people, ascribed the phenomenon to an indiscreet use of new wine. This suggestion, insulting as it was, gave Peter an opening for a sermon. Catching the opportunity, as Jesus had also been in the habit of doing, he denied the assertion and went on to explain that what they had been seeing and hearing was a fulfilment of the prediction of Joel concerning the promise of the pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh. Then turning to the events which had taken place a short while before, when Jesus hung on the cross, and which held the explanation of that day, he began to preach Jesus, his deity and resurrection. Such power did the Holy Spirit give to him as he preached that there came upon that vast host a deep conviction of their sin, and they came to Peter and his companions asking in agony what they must do. The answer of Peter pointed them to Jesus with such effect that three thousand accepted his message and confessed their faith in Christ. This was not all. The sermon and its accompaniments began a time of joy and progress for the disciples that showed itself in unremitting praise and in daily additions to their number from those outside.

PERSECUTION AND PROGRESS

The early promise shown in the events of the Day of Pentecost continued. One day Peter and John, going to the temple, were asked for help by a lame man who had taken his place there for the purpose of begging aid from the worshipers. Of silver and gold the two disciples had none, but they had that which was better and more helpful for the lame man, the authority and power conferred on them by Jesus to heal sickness. This power they now

used, and in a few moments the man who had been such a helpless cripple was shouting and leaping and praising God in the joy of his recovery. The miracle drew a crowd, and Peter used this opportunity of again preaching the deity and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is worthy of note that he did not try to smooth over or soften his message concerning their guilt in crucifying Jesus. Rather, this seems to have been one element in the conviction that ever followed his preaching. This time, however, his work was not allowed to pass unheeded by the chief priests. Hearing of the crowd that had gathered and was listening to the preaching of the disciples of Jesus, they were deeply troubled, for such a situation was fatal to any hopes they might have had of crushing out the new teaching. Faced by this fact, they sought to secure temporary relief by placing the apostles in prison. But the effect of the sermon was also apparent in the conversion of many, so that the number of the disciples reached five thousand.

The next day Peter and John were brought before the leaders of the Jews and asked to tell by what authority they were doing the things that were filling Jerusalem with such wonder. Peter boldly proclaimed that it was in the name of Jesus whom they had crucified that the miracle had been wrought, and went on to assert that in him alone was there hope of human salvation. It was a very different Peter who now stood before the Sanhedrin. He formerly had denied with oaths and curses any connection with Jesus. The resurrection had changed him, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit had made him bold as a lion in the face of persecution and threatened death. The answer given proved a hard one for the Jewish leaders to face. They could not deny the miracle, and yet to deny the assertion of the apostles as to the means by which it had been accomplished was equally futile. So they conferred together as to the best means of putting a stop to the preaching, as they had conferred together once before when they had sought means of getting Jesus out of the way. The only conclusion they could reach was to command them, with threats, not to preach any more in Jesus' name. Such a threat meant nothing to men who knew the presence and power of God, and they answered it by boldly stating that as far as they were concerned they were going to obey God rather than man and preach the

things which they had seen and heard. Their boldness did not please their enemies, but these found themselves without real reason for keeping them in prison, and so they threatened them again and let them go.

The apostles went to the other disciples and told them what had happened, and then the whole company went to prayer, asking not for relief from persecution but for continued boldness to preach the message of the Christ in power and the demonstration of the Spirit.

Meantime the work of the early disciples was gaining ground among the people at large. The Christians themselves, though this name was not given to them until somewhat later, lived in the closest esteem and friendship and sought through their personal sacrifice to care for the needs of the whole band. This fellowship in goods has sometimes been quoted to prove the wisdom of the practice of communism, but a closer study will show that it was not based on any theory of common ownership, but was the natural and spontaneous outcome of hearts that had caught in some measure the spirit of unselfish love that marked in its highest measure the life and work of the Master himself. It is in connection with this scene that we are first introduced to Barnabas, who was to occupy so vital a place in early Christianity through his discovery of Saul.

The harmony of the little band was soon broken. The honor given to Barnabas for his unselfish act aroused the envy of two of the number, a man and his wife, named Ananias and Sapphira. This couple, desiring to share such honor, but not willing to pay the price it demanded, sought by an act of deceit to gain it. Their deceit was made known to Peter, who at this time was the leader of the disciples, by the Holy Spirit, and its stern rebuke and the consequent death of the two wrongdoers made a deep impression on the rest. It was God's way of showing that the spirit of deceit and wrong must be eliminated from the company if the work of the early church was not at the very outset to be endangered.

The work and progress continued until we have the record of a popularity for the apostles such as was accorded to Jesus in the most popular period of his ministry. The crowds followed the apostles and brought their sick to be healed, not from Jerusalem only, but from the

country round about, and the Spirit of God gave power to the apostles to perform the healing.

Again, however, the prosperity of the disciples aroused the opposition of the chief among the Jews. This time they placed the apostles as a body in prison. In the night the gates were opened by God's angel and the apostles released. When this was discovered in the morning the disciples were again preaching in public the message of the gospel. Sending for them to appear before the Sanhedrin, they charged them with seeking to throw the responsibility for the death of Jesus on their shoulders. A strange complaint to make when this was the very thing they had done! But Peter and the others boldly asserted once again that they were going to obey God's command and that Jesus, whom they preached, was the Son of God as he had claimed. The council sought now to slay them, but were stopped when Gamaliel, one of their leaders, pointed out that if these men were speaking the truth God was indeed on their side, while if they were not the stir would die out of itself. They finally agreed to his words but relieved their feelings by beating the apostles before releasing them, and also forbidding them to continue their work. This charge was utterly ignored, for the apostles went right out and preached and taught Jesus.

ORGANIZING THE CHURCH

The very prosperity of the disciples brought new problems. The practice of caring for the widows and poor had continued, but the numbers of these grew so large that discontent arose over the distribution of goods. When the apostles found this out, they called the whole number together and advised the choice of seven deacons, or ministers, who should have charge over that feature of the work, so that their own peculiar work of preaching and prayer should not be hindered by the care such matters would bring upon them were things to continue as they had been. These deacons were to be carefully chosen, for upon them, next only to the apostles, would the responsibility rest for the happiness, contentment and progress of the work. Among those who were chosen were two who soon branched out into more prominent activity, Stephen and Philip. Of the two, Stephen first found himself put forward. He had been given by the Holy Spirit grace

and power, and worked great signs among the people. Finally, in a heated controversy with certain sects which were seeking to discredit and overthrow the work of the gospel, Stephen showed such wisdom and eloquence that his opponents were completely beaten. On this they hired men to bring false accusation against him, and he was brought before the council. Here he was called upon to defend himself from the charges. His speech of defence showed that the gospel was the natural outcome of the Jewish religion, but in the midst of it his feelings mastered him and he placed squarely upon their shoulders the responsibility for the death of Jesus, as the Jews of earlier days had been responsible for rejecting the messages of God through the prophets. This so enraged them that they carried him out and put him to death by stoning, laying the garments, which, for greater freedom of action, they had taken off, at the feet of a young man named Saul.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Covers the early period of Christianity, when it was centered in Jerusalem.

I. PENTECOST.

The Holy Spirit was given, as promised, to the disciples.

His coming was followed by the great revival.

II. PERSECUTION AND PROGRESS.

These now went side by side. Opposition and trial were accompanied by numerical increase and spiritual power.

The lame man was healed at the temple and Peter and John were imprisoned.

The greatest generosity marked the attitude of the Christians toward one another.

The case of Ananias and Sapphira was the one great stain on the record.

III. ORGANIZING THE CHURCH.

Necessitated by the growing calls on the apostles, and accompanied by the election of seven deacons, two of whom, Stephen and Philip, became noted for eloquent speech.

Stephen's martyrdom.

IX

THE WORK OF PETER AND JOHN

A.D. 35-47

(Acts 8—12)

The early record of the progress of the work of the gospel in Jerusalem is silent as to the activities of the greater number of the band of apostles. What became of Matthew, Nathanael, Thomas, and the others, is a matter of tradition only. All that we have recorded is some few incidents in the ministry of Peter and John and a glimpse into the life and work of one of the deacons, Philip.

The death of Stephen introduced a period of bitter persecution for the disciples. In this persecution Saul, who had cared for the clothing of the others when Stephen was martyred, was the leader. His own testimony later shows that he had become inflamed against the new teaching, believing it to be against the interests of true religion. His persecution was, therefore, sincere. It brought, nevertheless, a time of suffering for the followers of Jesus which resulted in their being dispersed from Jerusalem to the other parts of the Roman Empire. For some unstated reason the apostles themselves were not included in this general persecution and were able to remain for a time in comparative safety in Jerusalem. This may have been because there had taken place such evidence of special protection accorded to them that it was thought useless to seek to harm them.

THE REVIVAL IN SAMARIA

The rest of the brethren fled from the persecution, some going as far as Antioch in Syria. Among those who went was Deacon Philip, whose wanderings took him through Samaria. In common with the others he did not allow his flight to interfere with his bearing witness to the

gospel which he believed. In Samaria he preached with such effect that great wonders and signs and miracles of healing took place. A revival broke out, which resulted in large numbers professing allegiance to the new faith. Among those who did so was a certain man named Simon, called Magus because of his reputation as a sorcerer. This man evidently did not understand fully the preaching of Philip, but he did join himself to the brethren. Such a report went abroad of the revival that news of it presently reached the apostles in Jerusalem. Peter and John were sent down to investigate and to give any further aid that might be found necessary. This was the first time since Pentecost that we have record of any but the apostles leading in the work of preaching, and it was perfectly natural that among them there should arise a question as to the character of the work done in this direction by one whose election had been for a very different purpose. When Peter and John arrived, they found that the preaching had been well done, but that none of the converts had yet received the Holy Spirit. They, therefore, prayed for them and laid their hands on them, and the Holy Spirit was given. This aroused the cupidity and ambition of Simon. Such a power was beyond him and he greatly desired that he, also, might be able to confer such a gift. So he came offering to buy that power with money. Peter sternly rebuked his suggestion, stating in unmistakable terms that it was an indication of his own unregenerate heart. Peter and John, having completed the work for which they had come, returned to Jerusalem, not neglecting as they went to preach the gospel to other villages of the Samaritans.

PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH

Meanwhile, Philip had been taken by the Holy Spirit to the country southwest of Jerusalem. Here he found an Ethiopian of high position returning from a visit to Jerusalem and reading a copy of the prophecy of Isaiah. He was commanded by the Spirit to join this man, and, having done so, explained to him the meaning of the prophecy in the life and work of Jesus. Then at the eunuch's request Philip baptized him.

AT LYDDA, JOPPA AND CÆSAREA

Apparently a little later Peter made another journey among the Samaritan and Judean villages. On this trip he came to Lydda, where he healed the bed-ridden Æneas. From there he went to Joppa at the request of friends of Dorcas, and raised her to life. He then spent a few days in Joppa visiting a namesake of his. It was during this visit that an experience came to Peter which was intended to break down the wall of prejudice that existed against the Gentiles. It must be remembered that the Jewish ideal was that only to Jews had come the blessings of the worship of Jehovah. Jesus had sought to give to his disciples a wider vision, but they had been slow to grasp it, and after even the events of the Day of Pentecost they stayed close to Jerusalem, making that their headquarters instead of obeying the Great Commission and taking the gospel message into the other nations of the world. While resting on the housetop in the cool of the day a vision came to Peter of a great sheet let down from heaven and filled with animals of different kinds. Also there came a voice commanding him to rise and eat. In his vision Peter replied to the voice that he would not do so, since he had never eaten anything unclean. Three times this vision came to him, and then ceased. While he mused upon it, wondering what it might mean, he heard a knocking at the door of the house and found that it was caused by messengers who had come from a Roman centurion named Cornelius, who desired him to come and preach the gospel message to him, stating that he had been commanded so to send by a messenger from God. Then Peter understood the meaning of the vision to be that he must not hesitate to preach Jesus to Gentile as well as Jew. He went with the messengers to Cæsarea, and there found Cornelius and his family gathered together to listen to his words. As he preached, the Holy Spirit fell upon his hearers and he forthwith baptized them, seeking no other condition. Such an innovation was startling to the brethren at Jerusalem, and when Peter returned to that city he was forced to account for his action in baptizing Gentiles. He defended his course by pointing out that the Holy Spirit had already been sent upon them and he did not feel that any further proof was necessary. When he had finished his statement, his action was approved by the apostles, who

rejoiced that upon the Gentiles also had come the blessings of the gospel.

PERSECUTION BY CIVIL AUTHORITIES

Not long afterwards, the immunity that the apostles had enjoyed at Jerusalem met with a rude shock. Hitherto the persecution had come from the Jews. Now Herod Agrippa who had succeeded to the rule over Judea and Samaria seized James the brother of John and others of the church, and had James killed. This, of course, gave him favor with that large section of the nation which desired the crushing out of the gospel, and which now saw a strong ally in the civil government. When Herod saw how much his action pleased the Jews, he went a step further and imprisoned Peter, who was known to be one of the chief of the apostles. He placed him under a strong guard, fearing lest some steps should be taken to release him. In the night an angel loosed his bonds and set him free. When he came to the house where John Mark lived, he found the rest of the disciples engaged in praying. His knock on the door was answered by a maid, who could not believe the evidence of her senses. Running back to the others, she told them what she had seen and they in turn were skeptical, so hard has it always been to believe in God's answers to our prayers. Finally they let him in, and then all the company rejoiced together over God's mercy.

From this point on, we have no Biblical record of the work of Peter and John. Tradition places Peter's death at Rome, and on this tradition the Roman Church bases much of its claim to special favor, but there is no historic record that he was ever at Rome. We have letters both from him and John, written evidently much later than this, and two other books by John, one recording the vision which came to him on the Isle of Patmos revealing the events of the end, and the other the Fourth Gospel.

THE WRITINGS OF PETER AND JOHN

The two epistles of Peter came somewhere in the period from A.D. 60 to 70. They were written from a place called Babylon. Many students believe this to have been a synonym for Rome and that that was his abode when they were written. It seems better to take it as the name of the eastern city of Babylon. The returns of the exiled Jews had not taken back to Palestine any large proportion

of the Jews in Babylon. There remained a large colony of them in the eastern city, and that was probably Peter's residence at this time. We know that he was called the apostle to the Jews. His letters are addressed to the Jews of the Dispersion in Asia Minor. They were evidently written either under the sufferings of a bitter persecution, such as came upon Christians in the days of the Roman Emperor Nero, or were written in the expectation of such a persecution. They commend a high standard of Christian living and lay special emphasis upon the need of patient endurance in the face of unjustified affliction for the sake of Christ's cause. They make it evident that Peter was deeply and consistently concerned over the spiritual welfare and advancement of his Jewish converts.

Three epistles have been preserved from the pen of John, together with the Gospel which bears his name and the Book of Revelation. The first epistle centers around three thoughts, holiness, love and right belief, and the changes are rung on these three. These are the evidences of a right relation to God. John does not mince words in stating his position, and nobody, reading with unbiased mind his writings, can fail to be convinced that Christianity is something more than a mere profession. At the same time, the letter brings out some of the most gracious teachings regarding the relation of the Christian to God and the expectations that come to us through that relationship.

The second and third epistles are short, and are written in the form of personal communications to Christian friends, but they breathe the same spirit of opposition to false teaching and life.

The writing of the gospel was late in John's life, as indeed were his other writings. His presentation is the highest of all the four, as it pictures the divine origin and character of our Lord, and includes some of his most intimate teachings.

The Book of Revelation comes in for separate treatment in the last chapter of this book.

THE WORK OF JAMES AND JUDE

The author of the Epistle of James is accepted as being not the brother of John, but the brother of Jesus. He

evidently accepted the deity of his brother after the resurrection, and came, from his relationship with Jesus and his own ability, to occupy a place of honor and responsibility among the early Christians. He was the presiding officer at the council at Jerusalem which passed upon the orthodoxy of the preaching and teaching of Paul. His letter was written to set forth a number of practical details of Christian living, and discusses temptations or testings, wisdom and wealth. It is full of practical value for us to-day.

Jude is thought to have been another brother of Jesus. His short epistle is strong in its presentation of some of the fundamental beliefs of Christianity.

THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

The authorship of this epistle is a matter of much discussion. Popularly accepted as the work of Paul, it is thought by many scholars to have been the composition of some other one among the early Christians, though there are some who hold to Paul as the author. The book itself gives no name, and the question rests wholly on its style and the tradition of its authorship. It is a discussion of the typical elements of the Jewish law, written, as its name shows, to Jews, for the purpose of convincing them that Jesus was the fulfilment of the type set forth in the ceremonies of the Jewish law. It calls to faith in the crucified Christ and gives a long list of Old Testament saints whose faith was accepted by God and led to their reward. The readers are urged to a like faith and to purity of life and conduct.

Of the work of the other apostles we have little record. The Gospel by Matthew was written, as its name shows, by Matthew Levi, the converted tax collector. That of Mark, by John Mark, the early companion of Barnabas and Saul. It is thought that he obtained his information from Peter. The third Gospel was the work of Luke, the companion of Paul, to whom we are also indebted for the Book of Acts.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Centers around the continued activities of Peter and John. With the exception of the apostles, the disciples were scattered abroad by persecution.

I. THE REVIVAL IN SAMARIA.

This started under the preaching of Philip, the deacon.

Peter and John went there and completed the work Philip had begun.

The case of Simon the sorcerer.

II. PHILIP AND THE EUNUCH.

A digression telling of the conversion of the Ethiopian.

III. AT LYDDA, JOPPA AND CÆSAREA.

The healing of Æneas, the raising of Dorcas, and the conversion of Cornelius and his household.

IV. PERSECUTION BY CIVIL AUTHORITIES.

Death of James.

Peter placed in prison by Herod, but delivered by the angel.

V. THE WRITINGS OF PETER AND JOHN.

John, the author of the Fourth Gospel, three epistles and the Book of Revelation.

Peter, the writer of two epistles.

VI. THE WORK OF JAMES AND JUDE.

A letter from each of these brothers of Jesus.

VII. THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS.

Authorship unknown. Theme is the typical Messianic teaching of Jewish ceremonial worship.

X

THE CONVERSION AND ENLISTMENT OF PAUL

A.D. 35 to 47

(Acts 9: 1-30; 13: 1-3)

Of the early life and experiences of Paul we have but scant knowledge. From his later words we know that he was of the tribe of Benjamin and had been trained in the sect of the Pharisees, the strictest of the Jewish religious sects. He came of good family, having been born into the home of a Roman freedman. This indicated a high standing on the part of his father under the Roman government, as the honor of Roman freedom was only possessed by those born Romans or those who by large money payments or other great services to the empire had had it conferred upon them. We know, also, that he had been well educated, first in his home town of Tarsus in Asia Minor, and then in Jerusalem. He is thought to have been a member of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin, though this is not certain.

PERSECUTING THE SAINTS

He first appears in the Bible story in connection with the stoning of Stephen. There he gave assistance to the assassins by taking care of the clothing which they had laid off for greater freedom of action. He had been trained by the Pharisees to hate the gospel because it so fully denied their teaching and practice. The sight of the stoning of Stephen seems to have had a twofold effect on him. Its first evidence was a greatly increased bitterness. This showed itself in unmerciful persecution, in which he became a leader. None were safe from his hatred. He did not hesitate to enter Christian homes and drag out women as well as men, and carry them to trial and to prison. His anger fed upon his conduct, and at last he could find

no rest until he had carried out his persecutions far from the city of Jerusalem. Trained as he had been to believe that the teaching of the Pharisees was the true religion of Jehovah, and seeing that the new teaching was threatening the life of his faith, he threw himself wholeheartedly into the effort to stamp it out, believing that by so doing he was forwarding the interests of the work of God.

The second effect of Stephen's death seems to have been a question, faint perhaps at first, but growing stronger as he observed the patience with which the Christians bore their sufferings, whether after all there was not a truth in this new teaching that he had missed in the beliefs of the Pharisees. These two apparently contradictory tendencies seem to have gone on side by side in his thinking.

CONVERSION ON THE DAMASCUS ROAD

While travelling to Damascus with bitterness of heart against the gospel teaching, and with intent in that far-off city to persecute all who should confess Jesus, Paul was met by the Lord himself, when the bright light shone around him and he heard the voice asking why he was persecuting him. With wonder he asked who it was that was thus speaking to him, and was told that it was Jesus. It was in this second word of Jesus that it appears that Paul had had questions of heart concerning his conduct. Faced now by the words of him against whom he had fought, Paul immediately yielded to his commands, and going on to Damascus, blinded by the light, and evidently still in darkness as to what he was to do, waited there for the coming of someone to help him in his ignorance. This help came when Ananias, a disciple, was sent by Jesus to visit Saul and to restore his eyesight and impart through the laying on of his hands the gift of the Holy Spirit. When this was done Ananias left Saul to adjust himself to his new experience.

IN DAMASCUS

The first effect of his conversion was seen in his bold proclamation of the deity of Jesus. This preaching, coming from one who had shown himself so implacable in his opposition and persecution, was viewed with suspicion by the Christians at Damascus, but it made no difference to Saul, who soon showed himself mighty in the defence of

the gospel. Somewhere about this time came the three-year visit to Arabia, of which Paul writes in his letter to the Galatians. It was evidently intended as a period of adjustment of his old Jewish training to the new light that had come in the conviction of the deity of Jesus. From it he came back the greatest exponent and defender of Christianity the world has seen. He returned to Damascus from this trip.

IN JERUSALEM

Forced to flee from Damascus by a plot of the Jews to kill him, he went to Jerusalem and sought to join himself to the company of believers there, but they, also, were naturally skeptical of his actions, fearing that this was a trick to enable him to discover the names of the believers in order that he might thus continue his persecutions. It was at this point that Barnabas came again into the story. His first appearance had shown him to be a man of sacrificial spirit in connection with the needs of his brethren. Here he showed that he possessed a keen knowledge of character. He took Saul's side and told the brethren what had happened to him. Then the brethren opened their hearts to Saul and he became one of their number. Here in Jerusalem he now began to preach, and with such effect that he was again the object of a plot to kill. Seeing this, the brethren sent him to his home town, Tarsus. The man who had been the leader in the persecution of the early Christians had now become the one whom, most of all, the Jews feared and hated. Saul now remained at Tarsus for some time, but we have no record of his activities. We can certainly believe that the time was not spent in idleness but that he here also preached Christ crucified.

IN ANTIOCH

Saul next came into prominence in connection with the work at Antioch in Syria. This city must not be confused with Antioch in Asia Minor, where he later preached. The dispersed Christians who had fled from the persecutions at Jerusalem, had, as we have seen, gone to different parts of the empire. Some had settled at this city of Antioch. Here they preached with such power that great numbers of Greek and Palestinian Jews believed. When the news of this revival reached the apostles at Jerusalem they sent

Barnabas down to Antioch. When he arrived, he found that a genuine work of grace had taken place in their hearts, and with joy he exhorted them to continue in the faith. He evidently did not feel equal alone to the responsibilities of his new task and, remembering the power of his friend of earlier days, he set out for Tarsus to find Saul. When he had done so he brought him to Antioch, and together they labored to forward the interests of the work there. For a year they continued in this fellowship, and the work grew and prospered under their leadership.

At the close of the year they went down to Jerusalem for a visit, carrying with them the assistance sent by the Antioch brethren to the workers in Jerusalem.

It was at Antioch that the name "Christian" was first given to the followers of Jesus. Evidently given first as a mark of scorn for the followers of such a lowly man, it has come to be the most honored designation among men.

SET ASIDE FOR MISSIONARY WORK

Returning to Antioch after fulfilling their mission to Jerusalem, they continued their labors until a day when a new step was taken in the course of the gospel. These two with a few companions were gathered together in prayer when the Holy Spirit spoke to them and instructed them to set aside for his special purposes Barnabas and Saul. The nature of the special work was not stated, but the little band were obedient to the heavenly directions, and in solemn prayer and fasting, and the laying on of hands, these two were separated for their special mission. Then they were sent away and began their great missionary task.

With this incident the leadership in the work of Christianity definitely passed from Jerusalem to Antioch. Was it because, in the face of the Great Commission, the apostles had stayed close to their home city, while Paul had manifested the willingness, with the rest of his brethren at Antioch, to fully follow the leadership of God? At any rate, from this time on Antioch became the headquarters of the great missionary whose work was to be the outstanding factor in the spread of the gospel in those early days.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Centers around the beginnings of Paul's Christian life and work.

I. PERSECUTING THE SAINTS.

Bitter in enmity towards Christianity.
Held clothes of those who stoned Stephen.
Became leader in persecution.

II. CONVERSION ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS.

On road to Damascus.
Featured by the blinding light and the voice and his own blindness.
Sight restored, and Holy Spirit given through ministry of Ananias.

III. IN DAMASCUS.

Preaching Jesus, but finally fleeing from persecution.
During this period probably occurred the three-year sojourn in Arabia.

VI. IN JERUSALEM.

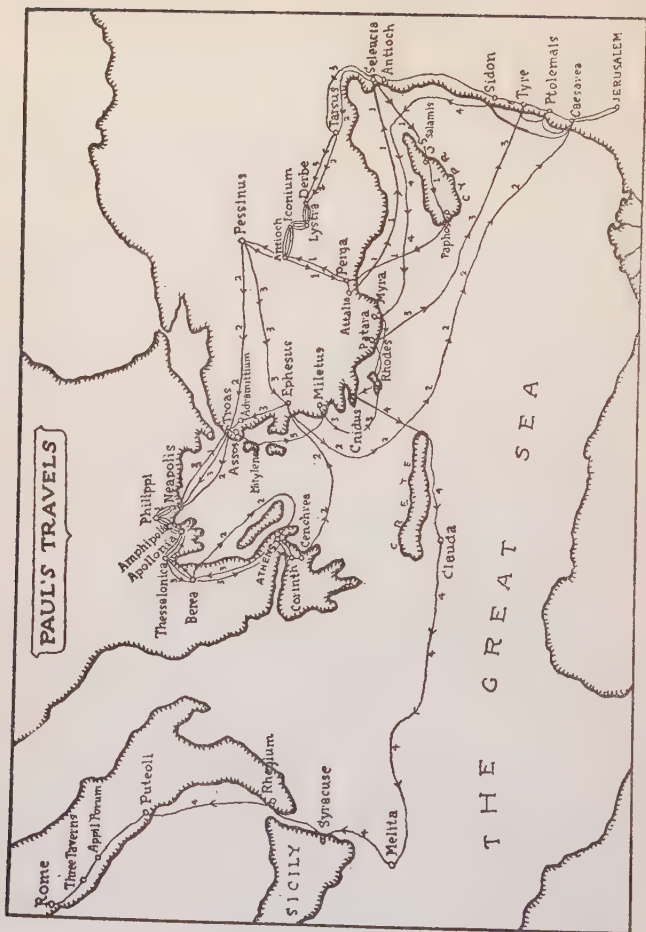
Introduced to the disciples and sponsored by Barnabas.
Became champion of the faith.
Persecution and flight to Tarsus.

V. IN ANTIOCH.

Called to assist Barnabas in development of work there.
Name "Christian" first given to disciples there.

VI. SET ASIDE FOR MISSIONARY WORK.

At prayer meeting in Antioch when the Holy Spirit called Barnabas and Saul for that work.
Leadership in spread of Christianity now passes from Jerusalem to Antioch.



PAUL'S TRAVELS

Paul's four successive missionary journeys are indicated by the figures 1, 2, 3, and 4.

XI

THE GOSPEL IN CRETE AND ASIA MINOR

A.D. 48-50

(Acts 13: 1—15: 35)

The prayer meeting in Antioch at which Barnabas and Saul were set aside for the special work to which they had been called by the Holy Spirit was the turning point in the record of the activities of early Christians. From this point on, the attention is centered on the mission work carried on by these two men, and in particular by Saul, who soon took the lead with the new name of Paul.

IN CYPRUS

At the time of leaving Antioch, Barnabas was the leader, as was fitting in view of his longer experience as a Christian worker. The first visit was to the Island of Cyprus. This was the home country of Barnabas, and this fact may have had something to do with it being the first place visited by the two companions. Landing at Salamis, on the eastern shore of the island, they journeyed across to Paphos, on the western shore. Here occurred the meeting with Elymas. The apostles were preaching the Word to the Roman proconsul, when they were interrupted and opposed by Elymas, who claimed for himself power more than mortal, passing as a sorcerer. Here Saul took the lead. Seeing that the attitude of Elymas would defeat their purpose in preaching to the Roman official, he sternly rebuked him, and immediately he was smitten with blindness. We do not know why Barnabas did not take the lead in this case. He was a good man, but evidently not as strong and incisive a character as Saul, and so gave away for his younger companion. The result of the miracle was the conversion of the proconsul. The two companions went on in perfect harmony with Saul as leader, who from this point on was known as Paul.

AT PERGA

Sailing from Cyprus, they now arrived at the mainland of Asia Minor. They landed at Attalia, the seaport of Perga, and here John Mark, who had been their companion from Antioch, left them. Little comment is made at this time on his action, but it was evidently due to some lapse of courage or faithfulness, for at a later time Paul was unwilling to set out again with Mark as a companion.

AT ANTIOCH

From Perga the little company traveled by land to Antioch in the province of Pisidia. Here Paul went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and began to expound the Old Testament Scriptures, doing this by the request of the Jews there, who recognized them as religious teachers. Taking advantage of this request, Paul began by showing them how God had brought their nation from its bondage in Egypt into the Promised Land, and claimed that of the seed of David, their great king, God had now, according to his promise, raised up a Savior, whose resurrection had proved all his claims, and he urged upon them that they should not through lack of belief come under the condemnation of God. This was a new teaching to the Pisidian Jews, who asked that on the following Sabbath they should speak to them again. When the meeting broke up there were many inquirers who followed Paul and Barnabas, and asked them further concerning their words. The next Sabbath, when they again came to the synagogue to preach, the crowds gathered in large numbers to hear them. Their previous teaching, and, can we doubt, their personal conversations throughout the week, had caused the most intense interest in their messages, and almost the whole city was gathered together to hear them. This popularity was not pleasing to the Jews, who may have felt that whatever of good there was in the new teaching belonged to them alone, and they, therefore, proceeded to contradict Paul, and sought to undo the effects of his work and preaching. Their opposition was met by Paul with the statement that it was but to be expected, for he had been sent to preach the message of the gospel to the Gentiles. This was his special mission and, much as the Jews objected to it, the Gentiles heard his words with overpowering joy. Under this enthusiasm the work

rapidly developed. Such progress was too good to last. The more the work of Paul and Barnabas affected the Gentiles, the more strong and bitter grew the hatred of the Jews, until at last, gaining somehow the favor of the city leaders, they prevailed upon them to persecute the apostles. When this took place, Paul and Barnabas left Antioch and went on to Iconium, another city in the same province.

AT ICONIUM

Reaching Iconium, the two companions followed the same plan they had used at Antioch. They first preached the gospel to the Jews in their synagogue. This was the wise and natural thing for them to do, as they had a contact with the Jews through their common faith that gave them a point of departure for their preaching of Jesus Christ. Here their preaching was well received, and many, both Jews and Gentiles, believed on Jesus. Again the opposition came from disaffected and unbelieving Jews. They knew that such work as was being done among them would undermine their own teachings and beliefs, and they sought to oppose the work of the gospel. For a long time the apostles continued preaching, and their work was confirmed by the signs and wonders wrought by their hands, but at last the city was divided into two parties, and they were in danger of losing their lives through the severity of the purposed persecution. They therefore left for Lystra.

AT LYSTRA

Here their procedure was different. Outside the gate of the city they found a lame man sitting. Moved with compassion, Paul healed this man. Immediately the multitudes jumped to the conclusion that the apostles were gods. The whole country of Asia Minor was heathen and worshiped the Greek gods. This religion taught that the gods had human form and attributes, and that from time to time they came down and talked with men, especially with such as they particularly favored. Each city gave special honor to its gods. Here at Lystra, in the light of the miracle that they had seen, the people believed that Jupiter and Mercury, two of their chief gods, had come to make them a visit. They, therefore, came bringing all marks of honor and respect and sought to worship Paul

and Barnabas. So the priest came and would have offered sacrifice to them, but Paul and Barnabas, since they could not countenance such an action, ran among them proclaiming themselves to be but men, and the messengers of the true God who made the heaven and earth. Even so they found it hard to stop them. It was not long, however, until the worship stopped indeed, for men came to Lystra from the other cities which Paul had visited, and finding what was going on, they poisoned the minds of the people and persuaded them to stone the apostles, which with all good will they did, so fickle is popularity. Paul in particular suffered so much from the stoning that it was thought he was dead, and he was taken and left outside the gate of the city. He soon revived, for God had not finished with his servant, and re-entered the city. He did not deem it wise to continue his work there in the face of the new conditions, and the next day with his companions left for Derbe.

AT DERBE

We have no record of any special happenings at this city. It is recorded that Paul and Barnabas preached there and made many disciples, and we are perhaps justified in believing that, in the main, things followed the same course they had taken in the other cities visited. They remained here some time, preaching and teaching, and then retraced their steps through Lystra, Iconium and Antioch and came to Perga. As they went they sought to strengthen and establish the faith of the disciples they had made.

Taking ship at Attalia, they sailed for Antioch, having completed their first missionary tour. This tour had taken them only through Asia Minor, which, as Paul's home was at Tarsus in that country, could not be regarded as foreign territory, but their preaching had laid emphasis on the fact that the gospel was not only for the Jews but for the Gentiles also.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM

Arrived at Antioch, they recounted to the assembled church their experiences, but their quiet was soon rudely disturbed. Paul's preaching had not been wholly to the liking of many of the Jewish Christians. These were perfectly willing to allow that Gentiles could become Chris-

tians, but they desired that the honor of being Christians should rest with the Jews, and they therefore sought to attach to the gospel a further condition, that the Gentiles must first become proselyte Jews, by submitting to the ceremony of circumcision, and coming under the Mosaic covenant. The preaching of Paul had not required such action, and it was galling to these Jewish Christians that the leadership which their nation had so long enjoyed as the chosen people of Jehovah, in religious matters, should be so completely taken away from them. To many this might seem to be a small matter, but not to Paul. His keen mind saw at once that to allow such a position would be to undermine the whole basis of the work of Christ. This had placed human salvation as something for which man could make no deserving gift, and which could become man's possession only as he accepted it as a free gift from God. Paul saw that this placed Jew and Gentile on an equal footing, and that to assert that Gentiles must first become Jews was to deny in one word the merit of the sacrifice of Jesus, since it would place some act of man as a part of the condition of receiving the salvation. Such a ceremonial requirement could have no place in the gospel, and Paul set himself to oppose with all his might this teaching. It was destined to follow him all his days, and in later years much of his strongest writing was done in the effort to offset this error.

The discussion grew so warm between the opposing sides that the brethren at Antioch finally concluded that they were not able to decide the matter, and so referred it to the apostles at Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas, therefore, journeyed to that city, and were warmly welcomed by the brethren there. They told them what they had done and what kind of gospel they had been preaching. At once some of the converted Pharisees, who could not see all the advantages of their nation thus thrust aside, took the part of the Jews who had opposed Paul and Barnabas at Antioch. Finally, when the apostles were all gathered together to consider the matter, an unexpected champion for Paul rose in the person of Peter, the apostle to the Jews. He reminded them how at Samaria he had been the first to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, and urged his companions, seeing that the Jews themselves had failed to obtain any merit through the law, that they should not

place such a burden upon Gentiles. Paul and Barnabas spoke again, telling of the wonderful results that had followed their work, and at last James, the brother of Jesus, who seems to have acted as president of the conference, rose and gave his decision. It was that circumcision and ceremonial acceptance of Judaism were not necessary for the Gentiles, but at the same time he urged upon Paul and the rest that the Gentiles should be required to observe some of the more fundamental moral requirements of the law. This last may have been a sop thrown to the Pharisees, or may have been a true statement of his own conviction. The outcome of the conference was a clear victory for Paul's preaching, and he later referred to it when, writing his letter to the Galatians, he argued for their abandonment of any ground of merit for salvation, and made a right belief in the Lord Jesus the sole condition of that salvation.

The two companions now returned to Antioch and reported the result of the conference to the brethren there, to whom it gave great joy and courage.

For some time Paul and Barnabas remained at Antioch with the church there.

TEACHING OUTLINE

This takes up the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas.

IN CYPRUS.

Barnabas leader until discussion with Elymas, when Paul comes to the front.

Conversion of Roman Pro-consul.

AT PERGA.

Landing in Asia Minor.

Defection of John Mark.

AT ANTIOCH.

Preaching aroused great interest, but in time apostles forced to leave the city through the enmity of the Jews.

AT ICONIUM.

Similar experience to that at Antioch.

AT LYSTRA.

Healing impotent man brought worship of populace.
Preaching well received until enemies arrived from
Antioch and Iconium, when persecution arose.
Paul stoned.

AT DERBE.

Many disciples made.
City marked end of first journey.
Apostles from this point retraced their steps and
sailed for Antioch.

THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM.

Grew out of controversy over Paul's teaching of freedom of Gentiles under the gospel from Jewish law and custom.
Question decided by apostles at Jerusalem in favor of Paul and Barnabas.

XII

THE GOSPEL IN MACEDONIA AND ACHAIA

A.D. 50-53

(Acts 15: 36—18: 22)

The missionary spirit of Paul could not rest content to remain in Antioch, and he soon felt the desire to go again over the ground covered in the previous tour, strengthening the churches which had been founded. He suggested such a tour to Barnabas, not seeming at this time to have had any idea of carrying the work beyond such a retracing of their steps. Barnabas was willing to accompany him, but they could not agree on their companions. Barnabas wished to take Mark along with them, but Paul with a vivid remembrance of the defection of that young man on their first trip would not consent. The two men were set in their views, and the matter finally resulted in their parting company. Barnabas would not give up Mark, and Paul would not go with Mark in the company. We think with somewhat of sorrow of the breaking up of such a companionship of work, but there is yet much to admire in their action. Barnabas was a man who seems to have always felt deep sympathy for others, and to have had a faculty for finding good men: witness his championship of Paul. He stood by Mark, evidently believing that his earlier action would not be repeated. Paul, on the other hand, felt the importance of their mission was such that they could not afford to risk taking one who had proved coward on the first trial. So with equally strong convictions they parted company, we may be sure without any loss of personal esteem for each other. It is interesting to note that the confidence of Barnabas was well founded, and that later on Paul himself found Mark a profitable companion (2 Tim. 4: 11). The parting of their company made it possible for two tours to be made, for Barnabas took Mark and departed for Cyprus, while Paul chose Silas as his new companion.

IN ASIA MINOR

We have already seen that Paul's first thought in suggesting another tour was the visiting of the churches founded on his first trip. Since Barnabas had gone to Cyprus, there was no need for Paul also to visit that place. He, therefore, with Silas journeyed through Syria and Cilicia.

His tour brought him first to Derbe, the last city visited on the other trip. From Derbe he went to Lystra, where he found Timothy, who had evidently been converted either on the previous visit or whose conversion was due to his mother's life and teaching. That this latter was the case seems probable from Paul's later letter to Timothy, in which he refers to the faith of both his mother and grandmother. This young man had gained a good name in Lystra, and it seemed well to Paul to take him along as a companion. For some reason, certainly not that he felt it necessary in order to assure Timothy's salvation, but probably in order to keep down prejudice and opposition, Paul had Timothy circumcised. The little company then proceeded on their journey. They seem to have retraced their steps through Iconium and Antioch, though the record is silent as to any activities at these two places, but then they found themselves in a dilemma. In some way they had been forbidden to preach in the province of Asia, at the western end of what we know as Asia Minor, and their way, therefore, led them through Phrygia and Galatia, where they preached and founded churches. When they sought to go northward into Bithynia they were again prevented from doing so by the Holy Spirit, and so travelled westward until they came to the seaport of Troas, on the shore of the Ægean Sea. Here they found lodging and stayed there, we do not know for how long. It is not certain that even yet it had come into Paul's mind that he was called for the purpose of carrying the gospel across the sea to foreign lands, but that conviction was awaiting him at Troas. One night there appeared a vision to him. A man of Macedonia stood and called to him to come over into that country and help them. So real was the vision to Paul that he had no doubt it was God's voice speaking to him, and without hesitation he sought at once to carry the task into effect. Setting sail, therefore, they soon reached Neapolis, the sea-

port to the notable city of Philippi. It seems to have been at Troas that Luke joined the party. He is generally regarded as the author of the Book of Acts, and reference will show that the writing changes at this point from the third person to the first.

IN MACEDONIA

Without stopping at Neapolis, the missionary party, stronger by two than when it left Antioch, proceeded to *Philippi*. When the Sabbath came Paul went to the riverside, where they understood was a place of prayer. Here they found certain women gathered together, to whom they preached the gospel. One of these women was Lydia of the city of Thyatira, in Asia Minor. She had made her home for some reason in Philippi, which was one of the chief Roman cities in that part of the empire, and followed her trade as a seller of purple. She readily received the gospel message and showed the genuineness of her conversion by immediately seeking to show hospitality to the apostle and his companions. So strongly did she urge this upon them that they seem at last to have accepted her invitation.

Day after day they went to the riverside to preach and to converse with those who assembled there. One day as they went their way they were followed by a maiden possessed of an unclean spirit, who had the uncanny faculty of being able to tell secrets, a sort of fortune telling. She had brought much profit to her masters through this ability, and now showed it by crying after Paul and his companions and pointing them out as servants of the Most High God. This did not please Paul, who turned and commanded the spirit to leave her. This it did, and she at once lost the power which she had had. At once her value to her masters vanished, and they were bitterly upset. They went to the rulers of the city, carrying with them Paul and Silas, and lodged a complaint against them. They were careful not to give the true reason for their action, but claimed that Paul and his company were preaching that which was against the Roman law. In a sense they were correct, for the Roman law required that no religion should be taught which was not officially approved. Judaism was recognized, but the new faith had not been. This was not, of course, their real objection,

but it did give them a loophole for securing the results they desired. Paul and Silas were accordingly placed in the prison.

In the night they were visited by an angel, who loosed their bands, to the accompaniment of a great earthquake which opened all the doors and loosed not only the apostles but all the other prisoners. The jailer also was awakened by the noise, and seeing the doors open he started to kill himself, knowing full well the punishment and disgrace that would be his had the prisoners committed to his keeping escaped, as there was every reason to believe they had done, since the doors were open. Paul calmed his fears by telling him that all were there, and the jailer came fearing and asking what he needed in order to be saved. What caused his immediate enquiry? Had he heard the preaching of Paul and Silas before? Or had he been impressed by the hymn-singing and praising he had heard from their lips? We do not know, but we do know that when Paul told him the way of salvation, and pointed him to Jesus Christ, he immediately accepted the message, believed on Jesus, and with his family was baptized. Unnecessary difficulty has arisen over this baptism. It is generally recognized that the language required that his family both believed and were baptized.

The jailer now showed every consideration for the apostles. They had been cruelly beaten before being cast into the prison, and now he washed their wounds and set food before them. The prison had become the place of salvation for him.

When the day came the magistrates, who had in the meantime concluded that there was no good reason for keeping them prisoners, sent word to release them. Paul now stood upon his rights as a Roman citizen. By Roman law no citizen could be treated as he had been, condemned and beaten and imprisoned without even a trial, and Paul demanded that now he should be given treatment in accordance with his rights. This the magistrates were only too glad to do, as they had rendered themselves liable by their conduct to severe punishment from the higher authorities. So they came and themselves released the apostles, who went first to the house of Lydia and then, feeling that their present usefulness at Philippi had come to an end, left the city for Amphipolis.

Passing through Amphipolis and Appolonia, they next stopped at *Thessalonica*, where they preached Christ once more to the Jews in the synagogue. For three Sabbath days Paul reasoned with them concerning the sufferings and death of Jesus, alleging that this was according to the predictions of the Scriptures themselves. Many here also accepted his preaching and believed on Jesus, together with some of the Greeks and noble women. Again however, the jealousy of the Jews at the popularity of the apostles made itself felt. Gathering a mob of the lower characters of the city, these now made an attack on the house of Jason, where they thought to catch Paul and his companions. Not finding them, they brought Jason and some others who had believed before the authorities, claiming that they had joined a sect which was causing riot and trouble all through the empire. The ruler required bond from them and then let them go. Truly the work of the apostles was proving the truth of the Master's prediction, that it should bring his followers into persecution. They were finding that to follow him meant indeed taking up their cross: but Paul and the others did not shrink from the burden. The brethren, finding that matters were taking such a course, took the apostle and the rest and sent them away to Berea.

At *Berea* they met at first with a kind reception. As they preached Jesus as the Messiah of the Old Testament and showed that his sufferings had been predicted, the Jews showed an openness of mind unusual among their nation, and began to study for themselves to see whether the words of Paul and Silas were indeed true. Many of them believed, also again Greeks, men and women. At last word reached *Thessalonica* of the success of the apostles, and the Jews there sent men down to drive them away. These, coming to Berea, stirred up a riot against the apostles, and the brethren sent them away. In every place they had found some who were ready to believe the word of the gospel, but in every place also they met with such a measure of opposition that in the end they were forced to leave.

IN ACHAIA

Leaving Berea, they travelled further south until they passed out of the borders of Macedonia and reached the country of Achaia. Paul had not taken all his companions

from Berea with him. Silas and Timothy had been left there. Paul came to Athens and sent word back for these two men to join him there. This they apparently did, though Paul soon sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to see how the new converts there were standing the persecutions that had come upon them. While Timothy was on this trip Paul waited at *Athens*. Here he found the people given up to idolatry. Athens, of course, was the chief city of Greece. The Greek religion glorified the human attributes and had a vast gallery of gods and goddesses who bore human form, who they claimed married and bore children just as men and women do. Their myths tell of such gods becoming the husbands of mortal women, and the list of mythical Greek heroes has many names of men whose fathers were gods. They were a very religious people, and in every part of this, their chief city, Paul found the evidences of that religious life. He seems to have remained silent as long as he could, but finally his zeal for the gospel made it impossible for him to hold in any longer, and he began to reason both in the synagogues with the Jews and in the open places of the city with any whom he could meet. His words were so new and strange to the philosophers (that class of men who spent their time trying to discuss and maintain their own peculiar views of life, and disputing over the relative merits of those views) that finally some of the Stoics and Epicureans took him to task. These two classes of philosophers took opposite views of what made life worth while. Both sought happiness, but the Stoics said it was to be found in the stern control of the appetites, while the Epicureans said it was to be found in the search for those things that would satisfy the appetites. They were, therefore, at the opposite poles of thought. These with others finally carried Paul to their central place of debate, the Areopagus, and there asked him to set forth more at length his new teaching. They were always ready to hear a new teacher and to discuss questions with him. Paul used his opportunity to the full. As he had passed through their streets he had noticed an altar differing from all the others. On it was an inscription dedicating it to an unknown or unknowable god. He took this altar as his text, claiming that he had come to tell them of that particular God, who was the Maker of heaven and earth and

from whom all men had received life and strength and all that made life worth while. So he proceeded to preach, and they listened to him until he said something about the resurrection of the dead. This was too much for them. None had ever heard of such a thing as that, and it seemed altogether outside of the reach of thought, as indeed it was. But others had been convinced by the teaching of the apostle, among them being one of the chief philosophers.

From Athens Paul journeyed to *Corinth*, an important seaport nearby. Here he made his home with Aquila and Priscilla, Jews who had fled from Italy on account of a royal edict. These were tentmakers by profession, and this being Paul's own trade, he joined himself to them. His tent-making was not his main business, of course, and Sabbath after Sabbath he went to the synagogue to reason with the Jews. While he abode here Silas and Timothy reached him and brought him their report of the progress of the work in Macedonia. It was with a full heart that Paul heard how the Thessalonica Christians were standing true to their profession, and he immediately wrote them a letter telling them of his joy and urging them to remain true as they had been doing. This is the letter that we call the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. He soon found it necessary to write them again. In his first letter he had been comforting them concerning the death of some of their number, who may possibly have been the victims of persecution. In giving them that comfort he had made mention of that glorious hope of the Christian, the return of the Lord Jesus Christ, and had told them that those who had died in Christ would be the first to rise to meet him at his coming. Among them were some who misunderstood his words and who thought they indicated an immediate return. They seem to have taught that in view of this there was no need for continued work on their part at all. This would make all Christians slothful and of no account, and Paul saw that this would bring the gospel itself into disrepute. He, therefore, wrote again telling them that they were not to expect that great event at once, that certain developments of wickedness were to come first, but that all these would be overthrown when he did come, and that he would in that day take ample care of his own and at the same time punish all

those who had arrayed themselves against him. The two epistles are a fine setting forth of the Christian teaching concerning our Lord's return.

The arrival of his companions also stirred up Paul's preaching zeal, and he began with new fervor to dispute with the Jews at Corinth. These proved so stubborn that at last he turned from them to the Gentiles. Leaving their synagogue, he made his headquarters in the house of Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, who had believed and who lived near by. Here for a space of a year and a half he preached to all who would listen to him. A change took place in the government, when Gallio came to be the Roman proconsul of the province, and the Jews thought this would be a good time to get the rulers to drive Paul out of the country. But Gallio refused to be caught by their suggestion and drove them out of his presence, claiming that, since it was a question of their own religion, they were the ones to settle it. The incident showed that the opposition of the Jews to the preaching of the gospel was not in any way diminishing, and that whenever an opportunity came they would try to drive out its teachers from their midst. Soon afterwards, however, Paul and his companions left Corinth.

He made a short visit to Ephesus, where he preached to the Jews, and then, passing through Cæsarea, he came to Jerusalem where he greeted the brethren. He then returned to Antioch, after an absence on this tour of from three to four years.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Second Missionary Journey. Paul now accompanied by Silas, having parted company with Barnabas.

IN ASIA MINOR.

Covered much the same ground as on first journey, but finally travelled as far as Troas.

Called in the night vision, the party crossed to Macedonia.

IN MACEDONIA.

Passed through several cities.

At *Philippi* occurred conversion of Lydia, healing of the soothsaying girl, and imprisonment of apostles,

with their subsequent deliverance and the conversion of the jailer.

In *Thessalonica*—Popularity of the gospel, but apostles finally forced to flee through enmity of the Jews.

In *Berea*—Well received. Bereans earnest and studious, but persecution finally aroused through influx of Jews from Thessalonica.

IN ACHAIA.

At *Athens*—Discussion with the philosophers on Mars Hill.

At *Corinth*—Wrote to Thessalonians and preached to Corinthian Jews. Moved headquarters from synagogue to house of Crispus. Returned by way of Ephesus and Cæsarea to Jerusalem and thence home to Antioch.

XIII

THE THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

A.D. 53-58

(Acts 18: 23—21: 16)

Paul seemingly did not stay long in Antioch before he set out on another tour. This time his travels carried him over much the same territory as that covered in his second tour, but in a different order. His first visits were paid to the provinces of Asia Minor, Galatia and Phrygia, where he encouraged and strengthened the Christians.

IN EPHESUS

His first stay of any length seems to have been at Ephesus, on the west coast of the province of Asia in Asia Minor. Here he found that a Jew named Apollos, who had heard and accepted the preaching of John the Baptist, had been at work. Apollos was an eloquent speaker, and many think him to have been the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. This man had made many converts in Ephesus, but knowing only the preaching of John the Baptist and not having apparently known anything of the true gospel as it had been revealed through Jesus and his disciples, the converts he made were of necessity untaught. It is interesting to know that at Ephesus Apollos fell in with Paul's earlier companions, Aquila and Priscilla, who knowing from Paul's preaching far more than Apollos did of the way of life, taught him concerning it: then he developed into one of the great champions of the gospel, so much so that in Corinth many began to call themselves his disciples, a condition that led Paul somewhat later, when writing to the saints there, to rebuke them for the divisive spirit that they were showing.

When Paul reached Ephesus he found some of the disciples made by Apollos, with whom he at once entered into

conversation. He began at once to question them concerning their beliefs and experiences. Finding that they were wholly ignorant as to the gift of the Holy Spirit he showed them more fully the teaching of the gospel, and when they willingly received it they in turn became blessed by the gift of that Spirit. The incident has been made much of by those who would claim that it is possible for a man to believe on Jesus and yet not receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and who would have all Christians seek that gift for full sanctification. But it is evident that these men did not fully believe on Jesus Christ, and when they did know and believe him the Holy Spirit was given to them also.

For three months now Paul had preached to the Jews in the synagogue, but when the conditions he had found elsewhere were repeated here also, and the Jews hardened themselves against the Word, he left the synagogue and with his disciples made the school of Tyrannus his preaching and teaching place. For two years he carried on his work here, and the fame of his preaching and of the gospel which he preached spread throughout the province. By him also many miracles were wrought. A rather humorous incident took place here in connection with his miracle-working. A band of brothers who had been going around professing to cast out demons from those afflicted with them, but who were nothing but frauds, saw that Paul had power to accomplish that end by commanding them to go out in the name of Jesus. Thinking evidently that this was some sort of magic name, they tried it out on the next demoniac they saw, but it did not turn out as they expected. The man turned on them in fury, exclaiming that he knew Jesus and he knew Paul, but he did not know them or recognize their right to command him in that name. So furiously did he attack them that, though they were seven in number, they fled precipitately before him. It was a bitter and humiliating lesson for them, but God used it to impress upon the people still further that only when such words were spoken by those who through faith in his Son had come to be his servants, was there any power in them.

So greatly did Paul's work move the city that at last the people came bringing their books of magic and made them into a big bonfire in the city square, thus signifying

publicly that they had lost all faith in them and were accepting the teaching of Paul in place thereof.

Paul's spirit came to be concerned over the needs of people elsewhere, and already he was feeling the longing to go and preach the gospel in the head city of the empire, Rome. His plan was to visit again the churches in Achaia and Macedonia and then go to Jerusalem before making his Roman trip. He did indeed follow this plan, but not in the way he had expected.

Sending Timothy and Erastus over into Macedonia to prepare for his coming, he continued a while longer in Asia. The work done during this visit had almost put the idol makers out of business. Matters came to a head when Demetrius, a maker of silver images of the goddess Diana, the patron deity of the city of Ephesus, gathered his fellow workmen together and pointed out that their trade was being ruined and that the worship of Diana was suffering. The appeal both to their cupidity and to their religious prejudice stirred them up and a riot ensued, which was with difficulty stopped by the authorities. Nothing came of it, but it seemed best to the brethren that Paul and his company should not remain longer. As this fitted well into the plans of Paul, he left Ephesus after the longest stay he had made in any one place on any of his tours. It seems probable that his first letter to the Corinthian Christians was written from Ephesus. Corinth was just across the Ægean Sea, and some of the members of the church there visited Paul. As he conversed with them he found that serious evils had arisen in the practice of the brethren. We must remember that at that time Corinth was a seaport of great renown. It was the center of the most degraded heathenism, both in worship and life. The new converts made by Paul, and those who had entered the church after Paul's visit, had for the most part come out of this degraded atmosphere. It was not surprising that at first they did not realize the full significance of their actions, but Paul saw that if matters went on as they had been going the whole cause of Christ was at stake. He, therefore, at once wrote to them urging them to rectify their conduct. We cannot go in detail into the letter, but a reference to it will show that among the matters he discussed were such practical questions as dissensions over their favorite leader, law

suits among brethren, adultery and a wrong estimate of marriage, the abuse of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and so forth. Their doctrinal errors included an unjustified importance laid on the gift of speaking with tongues and false teaching concerning the resurrection. In connection with these two last errors Paul has given us the finest discussions we have on the grace of love and the certainty of the resurrection.

IN MACEDONIA

From the Book of Acts we know that Paul's purpose when he left Ephesus was to go to Macedonia. It is generally agreed that we are to place at this point his second letter to the Corinthians, and the incidents there mentioned which are not included in the history of his missionary work. From that epistle we find that Titus was sent to Corinth to stir up the hearts of the brethren in regard to the offering they had promised a year before. We do not know the purpose of the offering, but it seems probable from the references in the letter that it was for the relief of some Christians elsewhere who were at this time in want. Paul places the grace of giving on a very high plane in this discussion and refers them to the example of the saints in Macedonia. The return of Titus with good news of their reception of his message prompted him to write this second letter. It is a defence in many ways of his own apostleship. There had evidently arisen some resentment at his previous letter and some had made light of his position, seeing that he was not one of the original twelve. This difficulty also faced him at a later time among the churches of Galatia. Paul defended his position, claiming that he had received revelations from God that set him apart from his brethren while his own Jewish family and training had also given him a standing among them. The letter is very strong in its presentation of the real meaning of the gospel as a matter of faith, and stresses the need of the Christian walking by faith in God and not by sight. It lets us into some of the sufferings experienced by the great apostle in his work which are not recounted in the Book of Acts.

IN ACHAIA

Paul now spent three months in Achaia (or Greece), and it is thought by some that he made Corinth his headquarters during this visit.

The writing of the letter to the Galatians is placed during this period. The letter is addressed to the churches in Galatia and not to any individual church. It was called forth by a serious situation that had arisen in that province among the Christians. We have already seen that Paul's preaching of the free gift of the gospel to Gentiles as well as Jews had not been at all pleasing to many of the Jewish Christians. The matter had been passed upon in Paul's favor by the council at Jerusalem, but this had not settled things. Now Paul found that Jewish Christians had gone among the churches in Galatia teaching that Gentiles must be circumcised and become members of the Jewish fraternity by that ceremony before the merits of the cross could have any meaning for them. Again Paul rushed to the defence of the liberty of those who believed in Christ. In an impassioned letter he appealed to the Christians in Galatia not to be led astray by this false teaching. He began by showing them that he had received a message in the gospel that had not been given him by men but by the direct revelation of God, but which had been approved by the apostles when he had submitted the matter to them. He pointed out that they had first received the gift of salvation by faith and that it was incongruous that they should expect their perfecting to come by the work of that law which had been powerless to save them. He pleaded with them to hold fast to their belief in his preaching and to the liberty which was theirs as believers in the Lord Jesus. The whole letter breathes the spirit of anxiety and love for these Christians.

It seems probable also that we are to place at this point the letter to the Romans. It would appear that Paul, having written to the Galatians, felt that it was necessary to set forth, for the benefit of the Christians at Rome, this same teaching. This letter was not written in the heat of argument and discussion. It is a more extended but quieter discussion of the same general teaching. Setting forth first the sinful condition of all men, Jews and Gentiles alike, and showing that Jews have no advantage over Gentiles except in their possession of the law of God, Paul

in the letter goes on to show that the righteousness which all men had failed to reach by their own efforts God was offering to them freely through faith in Jesus Christ. This faith when it is exercised will bring a man into a relation of peace with God and consequent joy in his experience. It will at the same time put him in opposition to sin, for sin cannot be permitted as a welcome guest in the heart of any who has been partaker of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. This in turn will bring about a condition of warfare against sin where the flesh and the spirit will be at enmity, but the victory for the spirit is to be certain through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, who is the possession of every truly regenerated man. The letter contains a long discussion of the failure of the Jews to reach God's ideals for them, this failure being due to their unbelief, and the Christian is urged not to fail by the same spirit of unbelief. Finally, in the light both of his own gracious experience and of the failure of the Jews, the Christian is exhorted to give himself wholly as a sacrifice to seek the high and noble ideals set forth in the work and teachings of the gospel. The whole letter is a classic and is generally considered the finest of Paul's epistles. Paul had not yet visited Rome, but many friends of his had gone there to live. He expresses his desire to visit them, and then to go on to Spain.

THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM

From Achaia Paul and his company travelled northward, changing his first plan to sail direct for Syria when he learned of a plot to kill him. He visited Philippi and then sailed to Troas, the scene of that vision which started him on his foreign missionary labors. After spending seven days there the party went to Assos, where they picked up Paul, who had gone overland from Troas. Touching at various points they came to Miletus, the seaport for Ephesus. From this town he sent to Ephesus, and the elders of the church there came down to greet him. The parting was a very affecting one. Paul had somehow come to know that in Jerusalem he was going to find persecution and suffering, but, like his Master before him, he set his face steadfastly to meet them. The elders deeply grieved over the parting, and in a touching scene the whole company knelt in prayer, and then said farewell.

At Tyre the scene was repeated, and then the party came to Cæsarea. Here the disciples sought to dissuade the apostle from his purpose to go to Jerusalem, one of their number taking a girdle and binding his own hands and feet in token of the experiences that awaited Paul there. They could not shake the faith and purpose of his heart. He was willing not only to be bound, but to die for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

So, for the last time, Paul came to Jerusalem.

TEACHING OUTLINE

The third missionary journey covered much the same ground as the second, but not in the same order.

IN EPHESUS.

For over two years.

Supplemented preaching of Apollos, and preached for three months in the synagogue, then for two years in the school of Tyrannus.

Great revival was marked by burning of magical books.

Uproar created by worshipers of Diana.

Paul and company finally left for Macedonia.

First letter to Corinthians probably written at this time.

IN MACEDONIA.

Where probably second letter to Corinthians was written.

IN ACHAIA.

For three months, probably at Corinth.

Writing of letters to Galatians and Romans.

THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM.

Visiting on the way Philippi, Troas, Miletus, Tyre and Cæsarea.

The whole trip was a farewell one, Paul realizing that bonds and imprisonment were waiting for him in Jerusalem.

XIV

PAUL'S ARREST, IMPRISONMENT AND DEATH

A.D. 58-68.

(Acts 21: 17—28: 31).

Paul's visit to Jerusalem opened auspiciously. He was given a glad welcome by the brethren. The man whose first visit to them had been received with so much suspicion, and who had been taken in only through the good offices of Barnabas, had become the chief among them in matters of gospel proclamation. He was now received with all honor and the brethren delighted to see him.

IN JERUSALEM

Soon after his arrival he spoke to the assembled apostles and others, recounting his missionary experiences. This caused great rejoicing and the brethren united in praising God for the work that had been done. They faced, however, a difficulty. The report had gone out that Paul was preaching that the Jews who had been scattered abroad among the Gentiles should forsake their national customs. This Paul had not done. His message had been that Gentiles should not be required to take up the customs and ceremonies of the Jews, and this was shown by his action in regard to the circumcision of Timothy, whose father was a Greek but whose mother was a Jewess, and who had been led by Paul to observe the custom on account evidently of his Jewish parentage. The report had spread, however, and the leaders felt that it was against the best interests of the work for that false report to be abroad. They suggested, therefore, that Paul should make a public demonstration of his own allegiance to Jewish customs for Jews by joining some other men in a ceremonial purification, thus disproving the report. This Paul agreed to do.

The matter did not turn out as they had hoped. On the contrary, some men of the city who had seen Paul in the company of a certain Ephesian, now seeing Paul in the temple, jumped to the conclusion that he had brought this Gentile with him into the sacred precincts. They raised a riot among the people, claiming that he was doing sacrilege to the temple. Such a report aroused all the evil passions of the mob, and they laid hold on Paul and would have put him to death had he not been rescued from their hands by the Roman soldiers. By the command of the captain, Paul was bound in chains, and then inquiry was made as to what he had done. The mob had gathered together without any real knowledge of the facts, and they could not give a satisfactory answer to the question. The captain, therefore, commanded that Paul should be taken for safety into the tower. While he was being taken there he asked for permission to speak to the people, which was granted when he stated himself to be a citizen of Tarsus. Turning to the people, Paul spoke to them in their own Hebrew language. This was a surprise to the mob who had not thought that he was a Jew, and they gave him a respectful hearing.

Paul recounted for them the facts of his own lineage and training at the feet of their great teacher Gamaliel, and told of his own conversion on the Damascus road. All went well until he came to the point of his own commission to preach the gospel to the Gentiles, but then the uproar broke out afresh, and with such violence that the captain had him carried into the castle. Here the captain sought by scourging to discover from Paul himself what the matter was, but when he was brought before him Paul protested against the beating which he had received since it was unlawful to scourge a Roman and uncondemned. Once more he claimed help from his Roman citizenship as he had at Philippi. It was on this occasion that he proudly asserted his free birth.

The next day the chief captain, having loosed Paul from his bonds, called together the chief among the Jews and sought to try the case. Paul made defence of his life before them, but it was immediately evident from the action of the high priest in commanding him to be smitten that he had no more chance of a fair trial than Jesus had had at the same hands. Noticing that the council

was pretty evenly divided between Pharisees and Sadducees, Paul seized that moment to declare his own Pharisee upbringing, and to assert that it was on account of his teaching concerning the resurrection of the dead that he was being called in question. This was a very dear doctrine to the Pharisees and an equally objectionable one to the Sadducees. His declaration was the signal for an immediate division. The Pharisees came to his help and the Sadducees bitterly assailed him. But the point of discussion had changed, and they were not now concerned over Paul but over this element in his teaching. The rivalry grew so strong that Paul was in danger of being torn in sunder by the opposing factions, and once more he was rescued by the soldiers.

That night he was visited by the Lord Jesus, who gave him comfort, but told him that he was to go to Rome and there testify for him.

IN CÆSAREA

A band of men now covenanted together not to eat or drink until they had killed Paul. Their purpose came to the knowledge of a nephew of Paul, who went with his information to the apostle. By his direction the young man was taken to the chief captain, to whom he repeated the news. Thereupon steps were taken for Paul's safety. With a strong escort he was sent away from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, the seat of the chief Roman official of that territory.

With him went a letter to the governor setting forth the reason for his being sent there. When the soldiers reached their destination, Paul was taken before Felix, who inquired of his birthplace and then remanded him till the next day when his accusers should come down from Jerusalem to lay charges against him. It was five days before they reached Cæsarea, and during that time Paul was kept a prisoner. Then the high priest came with certain others, and an orator on whose eloquence they relied to secure a verdict favorable to them. The two sides having presented their pleas, Felix postponed a verdict until he could hear from the chief captain who had sent Paul down there. But he never rendered the verdict. He knew that he could not justly condemn Paul, for he had done nothing worthy of death, but he

was not willing to face the enmity of the Jews by freeing Paul, as his predecessor, Pilate, had not been willing to face it by freeing Jesus. So he kept Paul a prisoner. During the two years that Paul was in ward at Cæsarea, both Felix and his Jewish wife found occasion to talk with him, and they were terrified by his plain and faithful words of warning. They would not yield to the suggestions of their hearts, but left Paul in prison, and he was still there when Felix was recalled and Festus was appointed in his place.

The arrival of Festus was viewed by the Jews as an opportunity to secure the death of Paul. They thought it not likely that so soon after his arrival he would venture to risk their hatred by refusing their request. They, therefore, came to him asking that Paul should be sent back to Jerusalem, intending on the way to slay him. Festus was not to be caught by such a plan. He declared that he was soon going to Cæsarea, and that if they would send men down there to bring charges against the prisoner he would give him a fair trial. This was done, and again Paul stood before a Roman governor to plead his cause. Festus could find no wrong in him, but the Jews had not been altogether mistaken in their man. Knowing that Paul was not guilty of anything deserving of bonds or death, he yet did not want to offend the people over whom he had been set, and so he asked Paul if he were willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial there. The patience of the great apostle had come to an end, and he now claimed his legal right as a Roman, of presenting his case direct to the emperor. This right Festus was forced to recognize.

Shortly after, and while preparations were in progress to send Paul to Rome, Agrippa, the Jewish ruler of Galilee, paid a visit to Festus. The governor told him of the man who had been left to him by Felix, and when Agrippa expressed a desire to hear Paul for himself Festus granted the request. The next day Paul was brought in and asked to state his case again. This he did, with such convincing eloquence that Agrippa exclaimed that if he had not appealed to Rome he could certainly have been set free. His appeal to Rome had removed the matter from their hands and they had no choice but to send him on.

JOURNEYING TO ROME

Paul was now entrusted to the care of a centurion, named Julius, who, with his soldiers, set sail for Rome. They touched at Sidon, where Paul was given permission to speak a few words with his friends, and then set sail again. At Myra, a city on the southwest coast of Asia Minor, they changed to a ship sailing for Italy. The winds were against them and they had slow sailing, finally with difficulty reaching a harbor on the Island of Crete. Here they were forced to remain for some time, as the stormy season had come and navigation was very dangerous. Paul counselled that they should stay there until the weather had improved, but the harbor was not a good one and the shipmaster felt himself more competent than Paul to decide matters. They set sail with a favorable wind and sought to reach Phoenix, another and better harbor on the same island. The fair weather did not last long, and they found themselves in the grip of a terrible storm which blew them far off their course and threatened the destruction of the ship. For fourteen days they were driven by the gale, not knowing where they were. Then they found that they were getting into shallow water. Not willing to risk going further in the darkness of the night, they dropped anchor and with fear and trembling waited for the day to break when they might discover their position. The sailors now sought to abandon the ship, but Paul, who had been a source of cheer and hope to them during the storm, counselled against this, and his part was taken by the soldiers. When day came they found that it would be impossible to save the ship but that they might be able to drive it ashore and so save their lives. This they did. When they ran aground, the ship soon began to go to pieces under the pounding of the waves, and the whole company made the best of their way to shore. The situation that had arisen had made it possible that some of the prisoners who were on board would be able to make their escape, and the soldiers counselled that this should be prevented by their being killed. This, the centurion, out of regard for Paul, would not allow, and so they were all at last safe on shore. But their plight was still a very sorry one. They had but escaped with their lives.

They found unexpected kindness from the inhabitants of the island, who treated them with all possible hospitality. As they were gathering wood for a fire with which to warm and dry themselves, Paul, who was taking his part with the rest in this, was bitten by a poisonous serpent. The islanders in their superstition concluded that he was a great criminal who, though he had escaped the fury of the storm, was not being permitted by the gods to retain his life. When he suffered no harm from the bite, they changed their opinion and thought he must be a god. The chief man of the island, which turned out to be Melita, our modern Malta, entertained them courteously for three days, and Paul repaid his kindness by healing his father who lay seriously ill at his house. For three months they remained on the island, and then found passage in a ship sailing for Rome.

Touching at Syracuse and Rhegium, they came at last to Puteoli, where they left the ship after an arduous and dangerous voyage from Cæsarea. At Puteoli they were met by some of the Roman Christians, who escorted them along the famous Appian Way until they reached Rome. So at last, after many dangers and in a way wholly unexpected, Paul reached the city he had long wanted to see, and where he had desired to preach the gospel.

IN ROME

The Book of Acts tells us little about the life of the great apostle in Rome. We are told that he preached to the Jews at his own hired house, which meant that he had considerable liberty there. The Jews at Rome proved as intractable as their brethren elsewhere, and he soon turned from them to the Gentiles. For two years he continued this life, and there the Book of Acts leaves him.

We know that during his stay there, which may have been for a longer period than the two years of the Book of Acts, Paul wrote several of his epistles.

One of his converts here was a runaway slave named Onesimus. He had belonged to a friend of Paul named Philemon, who lived at Colossæ. Paul sent Onesimus back to his master, but with him sent a letter commending him to his master and pleading with Philemon for Paul's sake to receive him with kindness. The letter is deeply interesting as showing the love of Paul for his converts.

Another epistle credited to this period is that to the Colossians. This, with the letter to Philemon and that to the church at Ephesus, are supposed to have been sent by the same messenger. In this letter Paul sets forth the headship of Jesus over the church. The epistle is strong in its presentation of the deity and work of Jesus Christ, and of the full freedom from legal righteousness enjoyed under the gospel.

A companion letter was sent at the same time. It is known in our Bibles as the epistle to the Ephesians. There is some doubt whether it was sent only to Ephesus, as copies have been found in which the name is omitted. It is possible that it was a letter addressed to Ephesus, but which proved of such value that it was freely copied with the name omitted and sent out as a setting forth of the gospel message. It pictures the blessings that the Christian enjoys in Christ, sets forth the change that has taken place in his experience through the grace of God, and after showing the writer's own relationship to the preaching of Christ to the Gentiles, urges the highest standards of conduct in church relations, in personal life, and in social relations. It portrays the diabolical opposition that the Christian must face and urges a full armoring with the graces of the gospel as the means of victory.

A fourth letter of this same period, placed by some after the other three and by some before, is that to the Philippians. This is sometimes called the love epistle of Paul. It was written to the saints at the city where Paul made his first European converts. The tenderest tie had always existed between him and them. They now remembered him in his imprisonment in Rome and by the hand of Epaphroditus sent him supplies for his sustenance. Their thought for his welfare deeply touched his heart, and he hastened to assure them that he was fully content that God's will should be worked out in his life. He told them that his very imprisonment had been a means for the spread of the gospel and that he had been able to lead to Christ some of the palace guard themselves. For himself he was expecting that he would be spared for further service, but that he could wish rather to depart and be with Jesus. He urged them to press forward in the Christian life, ever seeking to gain new heights of character and attainment, and told of his own attitude, which was

that of seeking to apprehend for himself that for which Jesus had laid hold on him. It is an epistle worthy of much study by all of us today. It breathes hope and joy out of the air of the prison.

It would appear that shortly after the writing of these epistles Paul was set at liberty.

LATER ACTIVITIES

After his liberation he is thought to have made his desired visit to Spain, though we are dependent upon tradition and probability rather than positive knowledge for these events. After a short period, when he also seems to have traveled in Asia Minor and Macedonia, and when he is thought to have written his first letter to Timothy and his letter to Titus, he was again imprisoned in Rome.

Timothy had been left in charge of the work at Ephesus and Titus at Crete. To both of these young men the aged apostle wrote, counselling them in regard to their work, and urging upon them the utmost faithfulness and diligence in view of the rise of false teachings and the falling away that he foresaw would come.

The Second Epistle to Timothy was apparently written after his arrest and while he was daily expecting death by execution. It is a continuation of his counsel to Timothy, but in view of his approaching departure and of the flight of all except a very few of his friends, Luke only being named, Timothy is urged to come to him. We are given an insight into his sufferings by his request that as winter was approaching Timothy should hurry and should bring Paul's cloak with him.

Tradition places his death at Rome in about the year 67 A.D.

So came to a glorious end the earthly life of him who, at the outset, was the bitterest enemy of the cross, but who, by the grace of God, had been transformed into its foremost exponent. He still stands out as the greatest figure, next to that of his own great Master, that Christianity has produced. Shall we not learn as we follow his career and see how alike it was at many points to that of our Lord himself, that for us, too, the highest possibilities lie in the service of our Lord and not in the satisfaction of those earthly and carnal desires after which the men of the world strive.

TEACHING OUTLINE

Covering the last part of Paul's life.

IN JERUSALEM.

Received well by disciples, but fulfilment of vow in the Temple precipitated a riot.

Paul rescued by Roman soldiers.

Next day appeared before Jewish council.

Was again rescued by the soldiers.

IN CÆSAREA.

Where he had been carried because of a plot of his enemies to kill him.

Held in prison by Felix and Festus until he appealed to the judgment of Cæsar.

Spoke before Festus and Agrippa.

JOURNEYING TO ROME.

The storm, shipwreck, experiences at Melita and final arrival at Rome.

IN ROME.

Preaching to Jews and then turning to Gentiles.

In prison, but with much freedom.

Wrote Philemon, Philippians, Ephesians and Colossians.

LATER ACTIVITIES.

Released from prison and carried out further missionary work, probably visiting Spain.

Again imprisoned. At this time wrote the pastoral epistles.

Probably martyred at Rome in year 67 A.D.

XV

THE REVELATION

This is probably the last of the New Testament writings in order of date. It was written by the apostle John, evidently from the Isle of Patmos, where he was in exile. Of all the books of the Bible it is the most difficult to interpret because of its large use of figure and symbol. Care must be taken to avoid either the extreme of absolute literalness, or that of pure allegory, if the message of the book is to be understood. It has been the center of, perhaps, more disagreement as to interpretation than any other book of the Bible, and yet it is the only book concerning which there is a blessing spoken to those who read and hear and keep its contents. It opens with a statement setting forth its nature and a salutation to the seven churches in Asia, in connection with which there is a prediction of the visible return of the Lord and the mourning by the tribes of the earth which that event shall produce.

I. The Vision of the Son of Man (Chapters 1: 9—3: 22)

The whole book is a series of visions. In this first vision John was permitted to see the glorified Christ, and to receive from his mouth individual messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor. These letters are not in allegory but in straightforward message. But a great deal of difference of opinion has always existed as to the way in which the messages were intended to apply, whether to the seven local churches alone, or to churches of all times, or as some hold, to the different ages of Christianity, each church by this last view representing a different period in Christian history. Whatever be the correct explanation, it is certain that a close study of the messages would greatly profit all churches today.

II. The Vision of the Seven Seals

(Chapters 4: 1—8: 1)

This is the first of the allegorical visions. The apostle, after a vision of One sitting upon the throne, who receives the homage of the heavenly host, sees a close-sealed book and, when he weeps because none is able to open the book and read its message, is pointed to a Lamb standing near as though it had been slain. This Lamb, he is told, who has the name, "The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David," will open the book. The seals are then opened, and one by one great events follow. The opening of the first four seals makes way for the coming forth of four horses, white, red, black and pale, respectively. From the description, these evidently were intended to prefigure disaster and calamity which should come upon the earth.

When the fifth seal was opened, John saw the souls of many beneath the altar. Following the opening of the sixth seal there was a great upheaval of heaven and earth and of the human race. The seventh seal was opened and there followed silence in heaven for the space of half an hour.

III. The Vision of the Seven Trumpets

(Chapters 8: 2—11: 19)

These seven trumpets were in the hands of seven angels, and as they were sounded one by one the apostle was given to see remarkable events taking place. As in the case of the seals, the sounding of the first four trumpets was followed by disaster upon the physical universe. The fifth trumpet sound was followed by a scourge of locusts from the abyss, whose king was named Apollyon. Following the sixth trumpet there came disaster from an immense army of horsemen, who by fire, smoke and brimstone destroyed a third part of the race. In spite of this destruction and that of the previous plagues, men, however, did not repent. The seventh trumpet opened to the apostle a vision of heaven and of the ultimate complete triumph of the Lord Jesus and his Father.

IV. The Rise and Fall of the Dragon and Beasts

(Chapters 12 to 14)

A dragon was now seen who sought to devour the newborn child of a woman, who was, however, delivered from

him. By the might of Michael and his angels the dragon was driven to earth, where he made war with those who kept the commandment of God and the testimony of Jesus.

The apostle then saw the rise of a beast out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, to whom was delegated the power of the dragon. He was able to secure the worship of all whose names were not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

A second beast now appeared, coming up from the earth, who lent his power to the first beast with such success that no one in the earth was able to trade in any way except those who gave homage to the beast. By sudden transition the apostle was now given a vision of the 144,000 in heaven and of the message of the angel, proclaiming the eternal good tidings to all men. Another angel followed, proclaiming the fall of Babylon, and still a third, proclaiming the wrath of God upon those who followed the beast. By contrast there is a blessing upon those who die in the Lord.

One like unto the Son of Man casts his sickle into the earth and reaps. He is followed by another angel, who also reaps. The result is fearful distress upon earth.

V. The Vision of the Seven Plagues

(Chapters 15: 1—19: 10)

This section opens with a vision of the joy of those who had come off victorious from the beast.

Seven angels are then seen coming out from the tabernacle of heaven, each one bearing a plague. The first four again relate to calamities upon the physical universe. The fifth brought trouble and pain to the kingdom of the beast, the sixth led to the coming of three spiritual demons, who should go forth into all the world, working signs and gathering men together against God. The seventh led to the fall of Babylon by a disaster from heaven. One of the angels now showed the apostle the judgment of the Great Harlot, the woman sitting upon the scarlet-colored beast. She was overthrown, and with her overthrow there followed lamentation for all who had trafficked with her. She is described as Babylon, the Great. It has been a point of much discussion whether this vision does not relate to the Roman Catholic system, and most expositors would take this view, though some would not

agree. The description of the lamentation of those who had trafficked with her is very vivid and significant. It is followed by a vision of the joy of the great multitude in heaven as they plan for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

VI. The Vision of the Final Struggle

(Chapters 19: 11—20: 15)

Here we see, first, the coming out of heaven of the King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is sitting upon a white horse and is followed by the armies of heaven, also upon white horses. Against him are arrayed the armies of earth under the beast and the false prophets. The struggle results in the complete overthrow of the beast and his armies, who are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

An angel now casts into the abyss the dragon, who is also called Satan, and binds him for a thousand years. During this period those who had not worshiped the beast reigned with Christ. At the close of the period Satan is loosed, and, going forth among the nations, once more deceives them and gathers them together again to war against the Holy City and the saints. This battle ends with the overthrow of the armies of Satan by fire coming from heaven. The devil then is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet have already been placed. Then follows the judgment of the great white throne, where those whose names are not found in the Lamb's Book of Life hear the word of their final doom and are cast into the lake of fire.

VII. The New Jerusalem

(Chapters 21-22)

To the apostle comes finally a wondrous vision of the New Jerusalem in the new heaven and the new earth. Into it none enter except those who belong to God, all others are outside. The description of the city is beautiful and magnificent to the highest degree, and forms a perpetual pinnacle of glorious hope for those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

The book closes with a final message by John as to his conduct after receiving the visions, and the promise of the speedy return of the Lord Jesus.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that in some way the visions seen by the apostle give us a revelation of the general course of divine dealing with men until the Lord's return. One can hardly read the book reverently and compare it with the other teachings of Scripture, without feeling that God's plan for the race is progressing according to his own wisdom and purpose, and that in his own good time our Lord will return to overthrow the forces of evil and to bring in that glorious period which we know as the millennium. Many questions, of course, arise in this connection which we must reverently be content to leave unanswered.

TEACHING OUTLINE

I. THE VISION OF THE SON OF MAN.

His appearance and the letters to the churches.

II. THE VISION OF THE SEVEN SEALS.

With the events preceding and accompanying their opening.

III. THE VISION OF THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.

With the events that followed their sounding.

IV. THE RISE AND FALL OF THE DRAGON AND BEASTS.

The deliverance of the woman and her child from the dragon. The first and second beasts. The 144,000 in heaven, and the punishment of those who worshiped the beasts.

V. THE VISION OF THE SEVEN PLAGUES.

As they were poured out upon the earth.

VI. THE VISION OF THE FINAL STRUGGLE.

When Christ is victorious and Satan finally conquered.

VII. THE NEW JERUSALEM.

Its beauty and the blessedness of those who enter into it.

XVI

OUTLINES FOR REVIEW

INTER-BIBLICAL PERIOD

(B.C. 536 to Birth of Christ)

PERIOD OF IMPORTANT CHANGES

Successive World Empires.

Persia B.C. 536 to 331.

Greece B.C. 331 to 167.

(Maccabean Period B.C. 167-63.)

Rome B.C. 63 to New Testament.

Changes in Jewish Religion.

Rise of Samaritans, Sadducees, Pharisees.

Development of Sanhedrin.

Synagogue Worship.

Apocrypha.

Preparation for Coming of Gospel.

EARLY LIFE OF JESUS

(B.C. 4 to A.D. 26)

Birth of John the Baptist.

Announcement to Zacharias.

Birth.

Name.

Birth of Jesus.

Announcement to Mary.

Place and time of birth.

Events centering around birth.

Visit to Temple.

Preaching of John the Baptist.

Baptism and Temptation.

EARLY MINISTRY OF JESUS

(From Temptation to Transfiguration)

Jesus, Working Alone, Presents Himself to His Nation.

Preliminary tour of Judea and Galilee—looking over the ground.

- Public Claim of Messiahship—In Judea, Samaria and Galilee.
- Period of Miracle Working.
- Beginning of Opposition.
- Choice of Twelve Apostles.
- The Apostles Accompany Jesus in His Work.
- A Tour of Galilee.
- The Sermon on the Mount.
- Renewal of Opposition.
- Parables of the Kingdom.
- Healing the Gadarene Demoniacs.
- Rejection at Nazareth and Tour of the Twelve.
- The Series of Withdrawals.
- Peter's Confession and the Transfiguration.

LATER MINISTRY OF JESUS

(From Transfiguration to Triumphal Entry)

- Private Instruction of Twelve.
- Healing Demoniac Boy and Teaching on Prayer.
- Greatness in the Kingdom.
- Forgiveness.
- Discipleship.
- Open Conflict with Enemies.
- Marked by Discourses—Light of the World, Good Shepherd.
- Efforts to Trap Jesus.
- Short Period of Rest at Bethany.
- Renewal of Conflict.
- Accused of League with Beelzebub.
- Denunciation of Pharisees.
- Sabbath Controversies.
- Raising of Lazarus.
- Interlude of Teaching—Journey Through Perea.
- Coming of the Kingdom.
- Divorce.
- Value of the Child.
- Rich Young Ruler.
- Laborers in the Vineyard.
- Prediction of Crucifixion.
- Zaccheus.
- Reaching Jerusalem.
- Triumphal Entry.
- Retirement to Bethany.

LAST WEEK

Monday.

Withered Fig Tree.

Cleansing Temple.

Tuesday.

Demand for Authority.

Parables of Two Sons, Wicked Husbandman, King's Marriage Feast.

Questions of Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians.

Denunciation of Pharisees.

The Gift of the Poor Widow.

Discourse on Second Coming, with Parables of Virgins and Talents and Picture of Judgment.

Enemies Plan His Death.

In Bethany—Mary's Love Gift—Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus.

Wednesday.

Quiet.

Thursday.

Passover Feast, with Example of Service.

Lord's Supper.

Conversation with Disciples.

Gethsemane.

Friday.

Betrayal.

Jewish Trial—Three Stages.

Roman Trial—Three Stages.

Denial by Peter.

Death of Judas.

Crucifixion and Burial.

Resurrection.

Appearances to Disciples.

Ascension.

CHRISTIANITY IN JUDEA AND SAMARIA

(A.D. 30-34)

Waiting for the Promise.

Pentecost.

Coming of Holy Spirit.

Great Revival.

Persecution and Progress.

Healing of Lame Man.

Imprisonment of Peter and John.

Death of Ananias and Sapphira.
 Apostles Imprisoned.
 Organizing the Church.
 Election of Deacons.
 Death of Stephen.
 The Revival in Samaria.
 Philip's Preaching.
 Peter and John Visit Samaria.
 Conversion of Ethiopian Eunuch.
 Peter and John at Lydda, Joppa and Cæsarea.
 Persecution by Herod.
 Death of James.
 Imprisonment of Peter.
 Writings of Peter and John.
 Writings of James and Jude.
 Epistle to the Hebrews.

THE EARLY LIFE AND WORK OF PAUL

Early Life of Paul.
 Home—Citizenship—Education.
 Paul the Persecutor.
 At Death of Stephen.
 In Jerusalem.
 Going to Damascus.
 Paul the Convert.
 Experience on Damascus Road.
 Experience in Damascus.
 Paul the Defender of Christianity.
 In Damascus.
 Visit to Arabia.
 In Jerusalem.
 In Tarsus.
 In Antioch.

LATER LIFE AND WORK OF PAUL

Barnabas and Saul set aside.
 Paul, the Home Missionary.
 First Missionary Journey.
 Cyprus.
 Perga.
 Antioch in Pisidia.
 Lystra.
 Derbe.

Paul, the Foreign Missionary.

Second Missionary Journey.

Separation from Barnabas.

Trip through Asia Minor.

Vision at Troas.

Preaching in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens
and Corinth.

Return.

Third Missionary Journey.

Ephesus.

Macedonia.

Achaia.

Return.

Paul the Martyr.

Arrest in Jerusalem.

Imprisonment in Cæsarea.

Journey to Rome.

Imprisonment in Rome.

Release and Further Journeys.

Second Arrest and Death.

THE REVELATION

THE SEVEN VISIONS

The Vision of the Son of Man and the Letters to the
Churches.

The Vision of the Seven Seals.

The Vision of the Seven Trumpets.

The Vision of the Dragon and Beasts.

The Vision of the Seven Plagues.

The Vision of the Final Struggle.

The Vision of the New Jerusalem.

SPECIMEN QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION

Experienced teachers, especially those who are teaching in accredited institutions, may submit for examination, questions of their own choosing. These questions should fairly cover all the chapters in the book, and should be reported, together with the list of names, when awards are requested.

Where classes are composed largely of adults who may be unaccustomed to close application in text-book study, it may be helpful to relieve anxiety by stating frankly in advance that all questions for examination will be taken from the list below, at least one question being selected from each chapter.

I

1. Why should we study the events of the four centuries which preceded New Testament times?
2. Trace briefly the changes in political history which occurred between the close of the Old Testament and the opening of the New Testament.
3. Indicate changes which marked the religious life of the Jewish nation.
4. What language had become common at the opening of New Testament history?
- ✓ 5. Show that there was a general preparation for the coming of the gospel.

II

6. Tell of the promise of the birth of John the Baptist, and of the promise of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.
- ✓ 7. Outline briefly the more important events which occurred during the childhood of Jesus.
8. Describe the baptism of Jesus. Why should Jesus be baptized?
- ✓ 9. Tell of the wilderness temptation.

III

10. Indicate some events in connection with the preliminary tour which Jesus made of Judea and Galilee.
- ✓ 11. Show how Jesus publicly presented himself as the promised Messiah, and tell of his reception.

12. What motive prompted Nicodemus to come to Jesus?
13. What evidence is there that the woman of Samaria really became a disciple of Jesus?
14. Describe briefly "The Period of Miracle-Working" which came thus early in the ministry of Jesus.
15. How may we account for the "Beginning of Opposition"?
- ✓ 16. Tell of conditions which led to the selection of the twelve.

IV

17. Are there evidences that Jesus sought guidance from the Father in the selection of the Twelve?
- ✓ 18. What was the real message in "The Sermon on the Mount"?
19. Relate some incidents which occurred on a tour of Galilee following the Sermon on the Mount.
20. Tell of the opposition which again breaks out.
21. Explain the general message which Jesus set forth in the first great group of parables.
22. Relate some incidents which are given in connection with a visit of Jesus beyond the Sea of Galilee.
23. Tell of some "further incidents" in Galilee.
24. Explain why the author speaks of "attempted withdrawals."
- ✓ 25. What was the occasion of Peter's confession?

V

- ✓ 26. Tell of the "private instruction" which Jesus imparted to the twelve following the transfiguration.
- ✓ 27. Outline briefly some incidents which occurred as "Jesus publicly accepts the issue."
28. Relate two incidents recorded during an interlude of quiet.
29. Tell of the period of conflict which followed the interlude of quiet.
30. Indicate some instruction which was given during the interlude of teaching which followed.
31. Name some events which marked the visit to Jerusalem for the final struggle.

VI

- 32. Indicate some happenings of Monday and Tuesday of the last week.
- 33. How did Jesus probably spend Wednesday of this week?
- 34. Relate briefly the events of Thursday.

VII

- 35. Outline the events of the Jewish trial.
- 36. After trial by the Jews, why was it needful that Jesus should be tried by the Romans?
- 37. Mention the three stages in the Civil trial.
- 38. Give briefly the course of events from the trial of Jesus to the resurrection.

VIII

- 39. Tell of the one event recorded between the ascension and Pentecost.
- 40. Narrate the events of Pentecost and tell of their significance.
- 41. Describe the persecution and progress which followed Pentecost.
- 42. Show how the office of deacon arose in the church.

IX

- 43. Tell of the revival in Samaria.
- 44. Show how Philip led the eunuch into the light.
- 45. Trace briefly the travels and ministry of Peter.
- 46. Tell of the persecution under Herod Agrippa.
- 47. What writings have we from Peter and John?
- 48. Say something as to the epistles which we have from James and Jude.

X

- 49. Why did Saul persecute believers?
- 50. Under what conditions did Saul find the Lord?
- 51. Where did Saul first preach Christ?
- 52. Tell of Saul's reception at Jerusalem.
- 53. Describe Saul's ministry in Antioch.
- 54. Show how the leadership passed from Jerusalem to Antioch.

XI

- 55. Locate Cyprus and indicate some important happenings there.

56. What event signalized the visit to Perga?
57. Locate Antioch and tell of Paul's ministry there.
58. With what success did the apostles meet in Antioch?
59. Describe the conditions which led the apostles to leave Lystra for Derbe.
60. From what point did Paul turn back from this missionary journey?
61. What was the occasion for the council at Jerusalem?

XII

62. Why did Paul and Barnabas separate from each other in their missionary work?
63. Relate some of the most important incidents of Paul's work in Asia Minor.
64. Tell of the prayer meeting which Paul attended in Philippi.
65. Under what conditions did Paul leave Philippi?
66. Under what conditions did Paul leave Thessalonica?
67. Describe Paul's reception at Berea.
68. Tell of Paul's ministry and experiences at Athens.
69. With what friend did Paul abide in Corinth?

XIII

70. Indicate some important events in Paul's ministry at Ephesus.
71. Show what conditions gave rise to Paul's two letters to the Corinthians.
72. Tell something of Paul's letter to the Galatians.
73. Under what conditions and for what purpose did Paul write the letter to the Romans?

XIV

74. Describe Paul's experiences in Jerusalem on the return from his third missionary journey.
75. Show the occasion of Paul's going to Cæsarea and tell of his experiences there.
76. Relate some incidents in Paul's journey to Rome.
77. Tell of Paul's ministry and writings while in Rome.
78. Describe Paul's later activities.

XV

79. Give some interesting facts concerning the Revelation.
80. Give an outline of the Revelation.

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